THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
400 Worcester Road Framingham, MA 01702-5399
Tel: 508-820-2000 Fax: 508-820-2030
Website: www.mass.gov/mema

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Peter Judge, MEMA PIO
(508) 820-2002

MEMA CONTINUES TO WARN OF LIGHTNING'S DANGERS

FRAMINGHAM, MA – Recent tragic events, in the Commonwealth, continue to reconfirm the dangers of lightnin when people are spending more time on ball fields, golf courses, beaches and boating. Therefore, it is important t keep you and your family safe during thunderstorms.

"There have been many different incidents of individuals being stuck by lightning this summer," stated Mass Management Agency (MEMA) Director Don Boyce. "Most recently, ten soccer players and fans, who sought saf storm under a large tree, were severely injured and hospitalized."

Know how to stay safe.

Before the Thunderstorm

- Know the terms used by weather forecasters

1. Severe Thunderstorm Watch – Tells where and when severe thunderstorms are likely to occur. Watch the sky and
2. Severe Thunderstorm Warning – Issued when severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated on radar. danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm.

- Before a thunderstorm strikes, keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of light, or increasing wir
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be affected by lightning, and should go inside to safe
- Thunderstorms can occur singly, in clusters or in lines. The typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter, producin from 30 to 60 minutes.
- When a thunderstorm approaches, secure outdoor objects that could be blown away or cause damage. Shutter wir outside doors.
- Remember that lightning can strike up to 10 miles ahead of or after the arrival of the storm. Listen to weather fore Radio, or to local radio and television stations for the latest information. In general, lightning will travel the easiest rout ground, which means it often strikes the tallest object.

- During this season people are taking part in activities that place them in locations most vulnerable to being struck courses, ball fields, beaches and large bodies of water. In the U.S., an average of 300 people are injured and almost 80 k which is more than tornadoes or hurricanes.

During the Thunderstorm

- If you are caught outside during a thunderstorm, you should protect yourself from lightning by going to a low-lyir trees, poles or metal object, which can serve as a natural lightning rod. (Make sure the place you pick is not subject to fl
- Make yourself the smallest target possible by squatting low to the ground and by placing your hands on your knee them. Be as low to the ground as possible, with as little of your body touching the ground as possible. (Don't lie flat; th target!).
- Do not stand on a hilltop, in an open field, on a beach or in a boat on the water.
- If boating, or swimming, get to land immediately.
- Avoid isolated sheds or small structures in open areas.
- Get away from anything metal such as tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs, bicycles, wire pipes, rails, and other metallic paths that could carry lightning to you from a distance.
- In a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a growth of smaller trees.
- If indoors, avoid metallic objects and fixtures.
- Avoid showering or bathing. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Avoid using a corded telephone, except for emergencies. Cordless or cellular telephones are safe to use.
- Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers. Turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lig damage.
- Use your battery operated NOAA Weather Radio for updates from local officials.
- Note that rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of increased protection, if you are not touching metal. Although you may be injured if lightning strikes you car, you are m outside.

The National Weather Service (NWS) also offers important information regarding Lightning Safety. That inform http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/overview.htm and http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/outd

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating fed and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provide plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; pr citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respc emergencies, both natural and man made. For additional information about MEMA, go to www.mass

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Region I
P.O. Box 116
365 East Street
Tewksbury, MA 01876
Tel: 978-328-1500 Fax: 978-851-8218

Region II
P.O. Box 54
12-I Rear Administration Road
Bridgewater, MA 02324-0054
Tel: 508-697-3600 Fax: 508-697-8869

Region III / IV
1002 Suffield Street
Agawam, MA 01001
Tel: 413-821-1500 F