

# THUNDERSTORMS

## Know the Terms

### Severe Thunderstorm Watch

Tells you when and where severe thunderstorms are likely to occur. Watch the sky and stay tuned to NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, commercial radio, or local television for information.

### Severe Thunderstorm Warning

Issued when severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm.

## What to Do Before a Thunderstorm

To prepare for a thunderstorm, you should do the following:

- Consider how a disaster might affect your individual needs.
- Remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage during a severe thunderstorm.
- Remember the 30/30 lightning safety rule:

Go indoors if, after seeing lightning, you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder. Stay indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.

The following are guidelines for what you should do if a thunderstorm is likely in your area:

- Postpone outdoor activities.
- Get inside a home, building, or hard top automobile (not a convertible). Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.
- Remember, rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning.

However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal.

- Secure outdoor objects that could blow away or cause damage.
- Shutter windows and secure outside doors. If shutters are not available, close window blinds, shades, or curtains.
- Avoid showering or bathing. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Use a corded telephone only for emergencies. Cordless and cellular telephones are safe to use.
- Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers and turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can cause serious damage.

Use your battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards for updates from local officials.

Avoid the following:

- Natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area.
- Hilltops, open fields, the beach, or a boat on the water.
- Isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
- Anything metal—tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs, and bicycles.



**Agging and Disability Resource Center of  
Southwest Wisconsin – Iowa County**

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<i><b>If you are:</b></i>	<i><b>Then:</b></i>
<b>In a forest</b>	<b>Seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees.</b>
<b>In an open area</b>	<b>Go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. Be alert for flash floods.</b>
<b>On open water</b>	<b>Get to land and find shelter immediately</b>
<b>Anywhere you feel your hair stand on end (which indicates that lightning is about to strike)</b>	<b>Squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground. DO NOT lie flat on the ground</b>

For more information on emergency preparedness, please visit our website at [ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov](http://ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov).

You'll find guidance on:

- Getting a Kit — of emergency supplies for your home, car and workplace.
- Making a Plan — to communicate with and locate your loved ones during an emergency.
- Being Informed — about the types of emergencies that occur and the safety measures you should take.

You can also get additional information from your county emergency management director.

**Aging and Disability  
Resource Center of  
Southwest Wisconsin – Iowa County**

