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## Lightning: Information for Workers

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### Risk

Lightning strikes occur most often in those who work outside or engage in outdoor recreational activities. The following occupations have the highest risk:

- Construction and building maintenance
- Farming and field labor
- Logging
- Explosives handling or storage
- Heavy equipment operation
- Pipefitting or plumbing
- Telecommunications field repair
- Power utility field repair



### Steps to Protect Yourself

If you work in high risk occupations, you can take steps to protect yourself.

- **Check the forecast**  
Know the daily weather forecast so you are prepared and know what weather to expect during the day.
- **Watch for signs**  
Pay attention to early weather signs of potential lightning strikes such as high winds, dark clouds, or distant thunder or lightning. When these occur, do not start any activity that you cannot quickly stop.
- **Follow the program**  
Know your company's lightning safety warning program, if it has one. These programs should include access to a safe location and danger warnings that can be issued in time for everyone to get to the safe location.

- **Assess the threat**

Although no place outside is safe during a storm, you can minimize your risk by assessing the lightning threat early and taking appropriate actions. For example, if you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you. Stop what you are doing and seek safety in a building or metal-topped vehicle with the windows up.

- **Avoid tall structures**

Avoid anything tall or high, including rooftops, scaffolding, utility poles, ladders, trees, and large equipment such as bulldozers, cranes, and tractors.

- **Avoid conductive materials**

Do NOT touch materials or surfaces that conduct electricity, including metal scaffolding, metal equipment, utility lines, water, water pipes, or plumbing.

- **Stay away from explosives**

If you are in an area with explosives, leave immediately.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER:** If your coworker is struck by lightning, he or she DOES NOT carry an electrical charge. Call 911 and immediately begin first aid response if necessary.



(<https://www.ready.gov/>)



(<https://emergency.cdc.gov/socialmedia/index.asp>)

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