

LIGHTNING STRIKE

DEFINITION – Lightning is a discharge of electrical energy resulting from the build-up of positive and negative charges within a thunderstorm. The flash or "bolt" of light usually occurs within clouds or between clouds and the ground. A bolt of lightning can reach temperatures approaching 50,000°F. On average, 89 people are killed each year by lightning strikes in the United States. Within Pennsylvania, the annual average number of thunder and lightning events a given area can expect ranges between 40-70 events per year (FEMA, 1997).



MITIGATION ACTIONS FOR RESIDENTS

- ▶ **Personal Preparedness** – It is important to plan for disasters. Families may not be together or at home. Consider completing the following to be prepared.
 - **Family Emergency Communication Plan** (FEMA) serves as a comprehensive checklist for household disaster preparedness. [FEMA Family Emergency Communication Plan Checklist](#)
 - **Family Disaster Plan** (American Red Cross) – Communication networks and electricity could be disrupted. Planning in advance will help ensure that all the members of your household know how to reach each other and where to meet up in an emergency. [American Red Cross Family Disaster Plan Template](#)
 - **Emergency Kits** – It is always a good idea to have an emergency kit on hand. Consider basic items as well as special needs.
 Build a Kit (Ready.gov) [ready.gov Build-a-Kit](#)
 Survival Kit Supplies (American Red Cross) [American Red Cross Survival Kit Supplies Checklist](#)
- ▶ **Emergency Alerts and Warnings** – To receive emergency alerts and warnings, refer to the following websites, mobile apps, and other resources.
 - **American Red Cross Mobile Apps** (Apple App Store, Google Play, or text to “90999” [Mobile Apps - The American Red Cross](#)
 - **South Central Alert** – This service allows residents and businesses in an eight county area to be notified of an emergency situation and important alert messages in a variety of ways, including on their cell phones, home and work phones, by text messaging and e-mail. [South Central Alert - Sign Up](#)
 - Monitor police news feeds, weather, and news on social media or websites. Receiving periodic updates is vital.
- ▶ **Surge Protectors and Lightning Protection** – Surge protection can be installed on critical electronic equipment. Lightning protection devices and methods such as lightning rods and grounding, can be installed on buildings.

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- ▶ **Be Prepared** – The American Red Cross provides the following instruction for dealing with lightning: “When the thunder roars, go indoors! Always pay attention to weather reports. If there is a chance of thunderstorms, stay indoors and save outdoor fun for another day! During a thunderstorm, stay away from windows and glass doors in case they break. Lightning can come in through the plumbing, so don’t do things that need running water. If you can’t get inside, stay away from trees and power lines, and make sure you aren’t the tallest object in the area. If you are in a car, stay there and don’t touch anything metal. If you are in the water when a thunderstorm happens, get out immediately and go indoors for safety.”



MITIGATION ACTIONS FOR MUNICIPALITIES

- ▶ **Adopt the York County Hazard Mitigation Plan** by resolution or develop and implement a municipal hazard mitigation plan. [York County Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)
- ▶ **Prepare a Continuity of Operations Plan** to ensure that essential functions continue to be performed under a broad range of circumstances, protecting residents and minimizing business interruption. Consider what capital improvements are needed to adequately protect business or properties. [FEMA Continuity of Operations Brochure](#)
- ▶ **Prepare an Emergency Operations Plan** which describe who will do what, as well as when, with what resources, and by what authority – before, during, and immediately after an emergency. [FEMA Guide for All Hazards Emergency Operations Planning Guide](#)
- ▶ **Coordination** – Develop pre-disaster Memorandums of Agreements or Memorandum of Understanding with adjacent jurisdictions. Build partnerships (neighborhoods, emergency management/first responders, businesses, utility service providers, and local government agencies to strengthen response and recovery.
- ▶ **Public Education and Outreach** – Educate residents regarding risk and impact of hazards, how to prepare and protect themselves and their property. Facilitate funding for mitigation measures and technical assistance programs that address measures that citizens can take.
- ▶ **Early Warning Systems** – Local and state governments can invest in public early warning systems/networks, as well as train people to serve as weather spotters.
- ▶ **Surge Protectors and Lightning Protection** – Surge protection can be installed on critical electronic equipment. Lightning protection devices and methods such as lightning rods and grounding, can be installed on a community's communications infrastructure and other critical facilities.