

Summary of 2022 Fatal Lightning Incidents

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During 2022, the National Lightning Safety Council documented 19 lightning fatalities in the United States and its territories. The 19 fatalities were a result of 15 incidents which occurred on 13 days. Three of the lightning incidents led to multiple fatalities with an August 4 incident leading to 3 fatalities. Last year was the first time a 3-fatality incident had been recorded since June 27, 2004. August 4 was also the deadliest day of the year with a total of 4 fatalities.

Fatalities occurred in 10 states, Washington, D.C. (3), and Puerto Rico (2). Florida led the nation with 4 fatalities. The Washington, D.C. deaths were the first lightning deaths there since May 17, 1991.

As is typically the case, about 80% (15 of 19) of the fatalities were men. Ages of the victims ranged from 11 to 76 with 11 of the victims between 20 and 39 years old.

Leisure-related activities led to the majority of fatalities (11 of 19) with 6 of the 11 related to water activities. The deadly leisure activities included boating (5), tourism(3), camping, going to a beach, and flying a remote airplane.

Work-related activities led to 6 fatalities and included roofing, lawn care, military exercises, window replacement, fixing a truck, and loading tools in a van.

The remaining 2 fatalities were attributed to the victims' normal daily routine and included walking young children home from school and walking a dog.

Detailed information on the 2022 lightning fatalities as well as information on fatalities from 2006 through 2022 is available from the National Lightning Safety Council "Fatalities" webpage.

<http://lightningsafetycouncil.org/LSC-LightningFatalities.html>

These incidents underscore the need to seek shelter early, well before the rain arrives. If you wait until it starts raining, you're putting your life in jeopardy. Lightning can strike 10-miles from the rain area in a thunderstorm. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance of the storm and need to get to a safe place immediately.

The National Lightning Safety Council recommends:

- Listen to the forecast and plan activities to avoid the lightning threat.
- If thunderstorms are predicted, consider cancelling or postponing outdoor activities, especially if they wouldn't be able to get to a safe place quickly.
- While outdoors, monitor weather conditions.
- If the sky looks threatening or you hear thunder, go to a safe place immediately. Don't ignore any signs of a developing or approaching storm.
- Remain inside the safe place for 30 minutes after the last thunder.

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!