



MSHA's Accident Prevention Program Miner's Tip

**SAFETY
IS A
VALUE!**

Lightning Hazards

Category : General Safety

Mine Type: All Surface

Over a hundred people die each year from lightning strikes. Recently a coal-barge loader was fatally injured when he was struck by lightning. He was located three barges, or approximately 200 feet, from the river bank when a dark cloud came over a nearby hill. Workers nearby observed the victim being struck by a bolt of lightning before any rain fell.



Here are some general lightning safety tips:

- When you first see lightning or hear thunder, go to the nearest covered building or enclosed car or truck. Lightning will often precede rain. If possible, don't wait for the rain to begin to find shelter.
- If caught outdoors, avoid water, high ground, open spaces, solitary tall trees, and metal objects. If shelter is not available, you should:
 - Crouch down with both feet together. Do not lie down or place your hands on the ground.
 - Do not stand near other people. Keep a minimum distance of 15 feet apart.
- If you are outside and you feel your hair stand on end, this is an indication that lightning is about to strike.

You should bend forward, putting your hands on your knees.

- Inside of a shelter, stay away from doors, windows and avoid water. Electrical appliances (e.g. computers, power tools) should be turned off and unplugged. If appliances can't be unplugged (e.g. telephones), stay away from them.
- Persons injured by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. Administer first aid to a lightning victim if you're qualified to do so. Send for help immediately.

For more detailed information on lightning safety, several web pages are available. An example is "Thunder and Lightning Preparedness Resources" at <http://www.tacda.org/resources/natural/lightning.html>.

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Remember – Safety is a Value that you can LIVE with!