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ANALYTICAL ARTICLE:

Struck-by-Lightning Deaths in the United States

On the basis of data from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), 374 deaths caused by being struck by lightning were reported in the general population from 1995 to 2000. The majority of these deaths (286 deaths, or 75 percent) occurred in the South and the Midwest. The number of lightning deaths was highest in Florida (49 deaths) and Texas (32 deaths).

Looking specifically at work-related fatalities, the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries reported 129 work-related lightning deaths during 1995–2002. Among industries, agriculture (44 deaths) and construction (39 deaths) recorded the most fatalities. The number of fatalities was highest in Florida (21 deaths) and Texas (11 deaths).

According to both surveillance systems, incidence rates were higher for males and for persons aged 20–44 years.

The last column on the chart shows the fatality rate per 1,000,000 employed persons, along with the confidence interval for that estimate. Percentages are rounded and might not equal 100.



Workplace deaths by lightning strikes, 1995–2002

Characteristics	Frequency (%)	Rate (CI)
Total	129 (100)	0.12 (0.10–0.14)
Industry		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	44 (34)	0.45 (0.34–0.62)
Construction	39 (30)	0.59 (0.42–0.81)
Manufacturing	6 (5)	0.04 (0.01–0.08)
Transportation and public utilities	8 (6)	0.13 (0.06–0.26)
Services	11 (9)	0.04 (0.02–0.07)
Government	13 (10)	0.08 (0.04–0.14)
Other	8 (6)	
State of Injury (data for low frequencies not shown)		
Colorado	7	
Florida	21	
Georgia	9	
Illinois	5	
Tennessee	8	
Texas	11	

SOURCE: Adekoya, Nelson and Kurt B. Nolte. "Struck-by-Lightning Deaths in the United States." *Journal of Environmental Health*, vol. 67, no. 9, May 2005, 45–50.