

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

The SAFEST location during lightning activity is a large enclosed building, not a picnic shelter or shed. The second safest location is an enclosed metal vehicle, car, truck, van, etc., but NOT a convertible, bike or other topless or soft top vehicle.

Motorcyclist/Bicyclist: So has anyone been hit riding a bike? Here are just a few real examples from the last few years.

- Virginia Beach, VA: Motorcyclist killed while traveling on Route 58.
- Altoona, PA: One motorcycle rider killed and three riders injured when they took shelter in a woods from a thunderstorm.
- Wyoming: Motorcyclist injured while driving home on I-90 from Sturgis.
- Taylor Park, CO: Dirt biker injured while heading down mountain pass. Protect yourself when on a bicycle, motorcycle or dirt bike.
- Carry a portable Weather Radio or listen to commercial radio.
- If you see threatening skies in the distance and you are passing a safe location, pull over and wait 30 minutes after the last thunder crack.
- If you can turn around and get away from the storm, do so!
- DO NOT ride into a lightning storm!

If you absolutely cannot get to a safe building or vehicle, here are some last resort choices:

- Wait out the storm below an overpass. DO NOT touch steel girders. Move away from your bike. Remain on dry surfaces if possible. Overpasses are engineered structures and are likely to be properly grounded. Although an overpass is likely to be higher than the surrounding landscape, if it is struck by lightning, the electrical current will likely be channeled safely into the ground.
- Look for a bridge. Stay away from water. Stay away from any metal surfaces. Be alert for rapidly rising water if under a bridge.
- High tension wires: If high voltage electrical tension wires cross the road, you may want to seek shelter directly underneath these wires. Do not get too close to the large metal towers which hold up these wires. Stay at least 50 feet away. Electric companies design these high tension wires for lightning strikes. If lightning should strike the wires or towers, the current is designed to safely go deep into the ground.
- If you are caught in the open and lightning is occurring within 5 miles, STOP riding, get off of your motorcycle, find a ditch or other low spot and sit down.
- Motorcyclists should move at least 50 feet away from their bike.

Source: www.noaa.gov

IMPORTANT: These recommendations are a last resort. You are NOT safe in these places just marginally safer than in the open.