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# LIGHTNING SAFETY ON THE WATER

**If you are on or in the water, get to land as quickly as possible at the first sign of a storm.**

Lightning is often one of the first indicators of an approaching storm, although you may notice the thunder accompanying it first. More severe weather hazards are likely to develop. Small or open boats with no cabin are especially at risk. Sudden strong winds, waves and fast moving storms can make it difficult to reach shore safely so you need to have a plan to reach safety well before a storm strikes.

Once ashore, seek a safe location either in a building with wiring and plumbing or an all-metal vehicle (not convertible top).

If caught outside far from a safe location, stay away from tall objects, such as trees, poles, wires and fences. Take shelter in a low lying area.

Stay off and out of the water, and in a safe location for 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder. About one third of lightning-related casualties occur after the storm because people return to outdoor activities too soon.

Swimming, boating, personal watercraft or sail/surf boarding are all dangerous activities when lightning is in the area. Scientists know little about what happens when lightning hits water. It is not clear how deep a lightning strike will travel down through the water. We do know that if a lightning strike hits the water, it will travel along the surface in all directions. People have been killed or injured by direct or indirect strikes (ground current or side flash) while in or on the water, boats, docks, piers, or while fishing, for example.

Monitoring Environment Canada's Lightning Danger Maps when thunderstorms are forecast can help you reduce your risk of being struck by lightning.

There is no safe place outside in a thunderstorm. So remember:

## When thunder roars, GO INDOORS!

and stay there for 30 minutes until after the last rumble of thunder is heard.

For more information on lightning visit Environment Canada's Lightning website at

[www.ec.gc.ca/foudre-lightning](http://www.ec.gc.ca/foudre-lightning)



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