

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Texas Department of Public Safety

For Immediate Release:

SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS:
SAFETY TIPS WHEN LIGHTENING STRIKES

Austin, TX – The Division of Emergency Management, Texas Department of Public Safety urges Texans to take precautions during lightening storms because lightening is the second most common cause of weather-related deaths in the state, after flooding. Here are some important tips to protect yourself and your family.

Lightning tends to strike tall objects, and can travel through moist soils for dozens of feet. Move into a sturdy building and stay away from windows and doors. For increased protection, avoid electric appliances or metal plumbing. Stay off the telephone.

If you are outside, the interior of a car, truck or bus is relatively safe from lightening. To be safe, do not touch metal on the inside of the vehicle. The outside bed of a truck is a deadly location. Do not lean against a car or truck – get inside the vehicle quickly.

If you are outdoors with no shelter available, stay low. Move away from hills and high places, and avoid tall, isolated trees. Do not touch metal objects, such as tennis rackets, baseball bats or golf clubs. Do not ride bicycles, or lean against fences or metal sheds.

If you feel your hair suddenly stands on end, it means you may be a lightening target. Crouch low on the balls of your feet and try not to touch the ground with your knees or hands. Avoid wet areas that can conduct the lightening charge.

For more information, contact Mary Lenz or William Ayres at (512) 424-2138 or visit DEM's Web site: www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem.