



Hernando County

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS



SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK IS JAN 23-27

Preparing for severe weather is the theme of *Florida's Severe Weather Awareness Week*. Each day focuses on a specific weather event that provides Floridians the opportunity to learn about various weather hazards. Preparedness plans come in all sizes, as dictated by individual and collective needs. However, we always need to remember the potential for severe weather. It's encouraged that you and your family **"Get A Plan"** that prepares you for all types of disasters and to share your plan with your family and your friends. Making sure your family and business is prepared for severe weather is essential to being able to pull through a storm safely. Hurricanes are perhaps the most distinctive severe weather threat we face. But the size and diversity of our wonderful State mean we all must be prepared for a number of possibilities including wildfires, rip currents, severe thunderstorms, and lightning.

Florida has experienced a number of other disasters such as tornadoes, severe storms, wildfires and flooding, some of these record breaking. Residents and visitors are reminded that severe weather can occur at any time and being prepared is the key to building resilient communities.

- ❖ Do you know the basic safety rules?
- ❖ Would your children know what to do if they were home alone?
- ❖ Do you have plans in place to move elders or people with disabilities to shelter quickly?

"The Statewide Tornado Drill"

The Nation Weather Service will be conducting "The Statewide Tornado Drill" as part of the **2017 Florida Severe Weather Awareness Week**. This drill will provide valuable information to assist you and your family to remain safe in an emergency. Everyone is encouraged to take steps now to prepare yourself, your family, your pets, and your business.

Date: Wednesday, 25 January 2017
Time: 10:10 am

The Tornado Drill will be conducted using the weather radio Routine Weekly Test (RWT) code. The drill will **NOT** use a live/real Tornado Warning message. All functioning weather radios will receive the alert, but not all radio models will activate the audible alarm, since this is the weekly test code, not a live warning.

MARK TRAIL CHAMPIONS NOAA WEATHER RADIO- THE VOICE OF THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE



PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER (PIC) : (352) 754-4083 or (352) 754-4111 (Recorded)

Hernando County Sheriff Office - Emergency Management	National Weather Service - Brooksville
Florida Division of Emergency Management	FEMA
MyFlorida.com	American Red Cross



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**Participate in the Statewide Tornado Drill on January 25, 2017,
or plan your own drill using the following timeline:**

On the morning of the drill, all participants should consider themselves under a Tornado Watch. A Watch means you should monitor the weather and be prepared to go to a safe place in the event of a Warning. At approximately 10:10 a.m. EST, the National Weather Service will issue a practice Tornado Warning. The Warning will be broadcast on NOAA Alert Radio as a weekly test message.

In real life, you must listen for the Watch and Warning messages to determine the threat to your area, and decide which protective actions to take. When in doubt, take immediate protective actions!

Before the Drill

- Prepare
- Inform staff / family
- Review and refine a tornado plan (www.ready.gov/tornadoes)

The Day of the Drill

After 8:00 a.m. EST, Consider a Tornado Watch to be in effect

- Announce watch to staff and/or students
- Designate authority (coordinator)
- Evacuate tornado vulnerable areas

10:00 a.m. EST, Tornado Warning

- Receive message
- Coordinator determines threat
- Upon determination of immediate threat, give “take shelter” or “duck and cover” command (depending on space available at location)

10:20 a.m. EST, Termination of Watch and Warning

- Give instructions to return to normal activities
- (You will not receive notification. Terminate the drill as you see fit.)

After the Drill

Wrap-up

- Following the drill, assess and revise plan as needed.

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THE GREAT TORNADO DRILL

Wednesday,
January 25, 2017
at 10:00 a.m.



HE'S SMART, BUT HE HAS HIS
SHELTER ON HIS BACK...

YOU MUST LEARN TO FIND SHELTER



HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Step 1: Register at <http://www.flgetaplan.com/alertflorida>

Step 2: Practice your plan.

Step 3: Snap a photo and post with #tornadodrill

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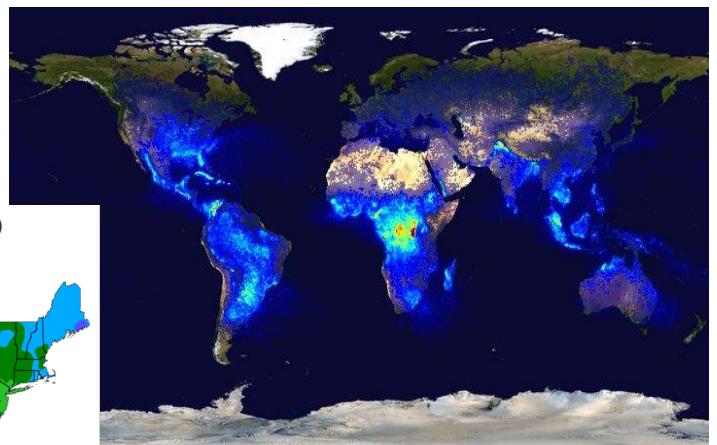
Florida's Severe Weather Awareness Week takes place from January 23-27, 2017. Severe Weather Awareness Week is an opportunity for Floridians to learn about the various weather hazards that frequently impact the state and how families and businesses can prepare for these natural events.

Each day focuses on a specific weather event. **Monday's focus is on lightning.**

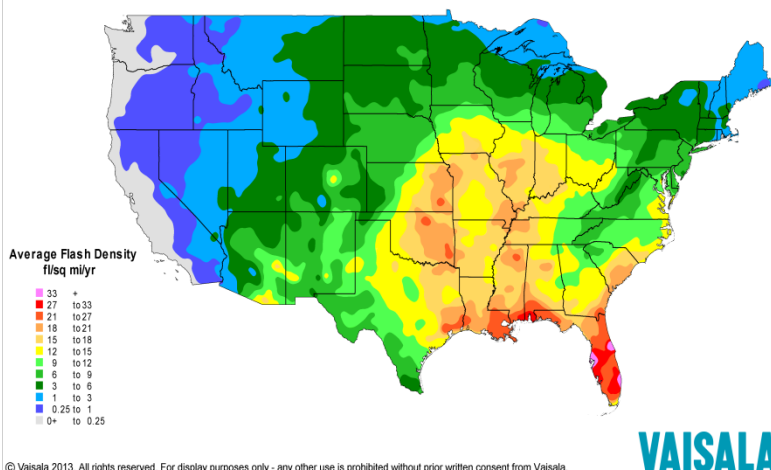
Lightning is one of nature's deadliest and most unpredictable weather phenomena. Meteorologists can forecast the general conditions that cause lightning but no one can forecast the exact location or time of the next strike of lightning.

All thunderstorms contain lightning which can strike a person, tree or an object either on the ground or in the air. Lightning strikes the ground about 25 million times each year and continues to be among the top weather-related killers in the United States.

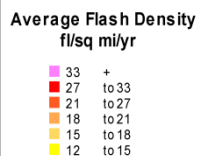
The 2017 Florida Severe Weather Awareness Week is a perfect time to note that our state, out of all 50 states, is the lightning capital of the North America. With an average of 1.2 million cloud- to-ground lightning strikes each year, no other state experiences more lightning strikes per square mile than Florida.



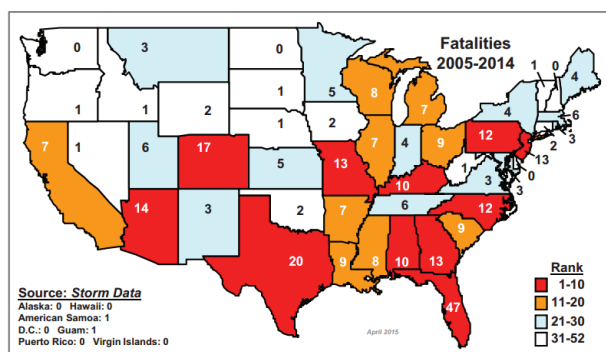
Cloud-to-Ground Lightning Incidence in the Continental U.S. (1997 - 2012)



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Lightning Fatalities by State, 2005-2014



Lightning is often seen as an underrated killer, because it does not generate as much attention compared to other forms of hazardous weather and usually only claims one or two victims at a time. Most people that are struck by lightning are not killed, but suffer significant injuries. On average, lightning kills 49 people each year in the United States. Florida averages 7 fatalities per year due to lightning, with many more injuries, and often leads the nation in lightning deaths. In 2016, Florida again claimed this unfortunate distinction, with 9 total fatalities.

Why does Florida have this distinction? Florida's geography plays a large role, especially during the summer. Some of the elements that make Florida such a great place to live, such as sunshine and the ocean, play important roles in the development of thunderstorms. Because thunderstorm activity peaks in the summer, when most people are enjoying the warm weather, Florida often has the greatest number of lightning fatalities each year in the United States.

One characteristic that makes lightning so dangerous is its extensive range. Lightning has the ability to strike 10 miles or more away from the thunderstorm core, making it the first storm hazard to arrive and the last to leave, so while it may not be raining at your location, lightning can still reach you. Also, once the lightning strike hits the ground, it can travel *up to 60 feet outward* from the point of contact. The other characteristic that makes lightning so dangerous is its power and speed. The average lightning bolt carries 100 million volts of electrical potential.



DID YOU KNOW??? Contrary to belief, lightning CAN strike the same place twice and rubber shoes or tires DO NOT protect you from lightning strikes.

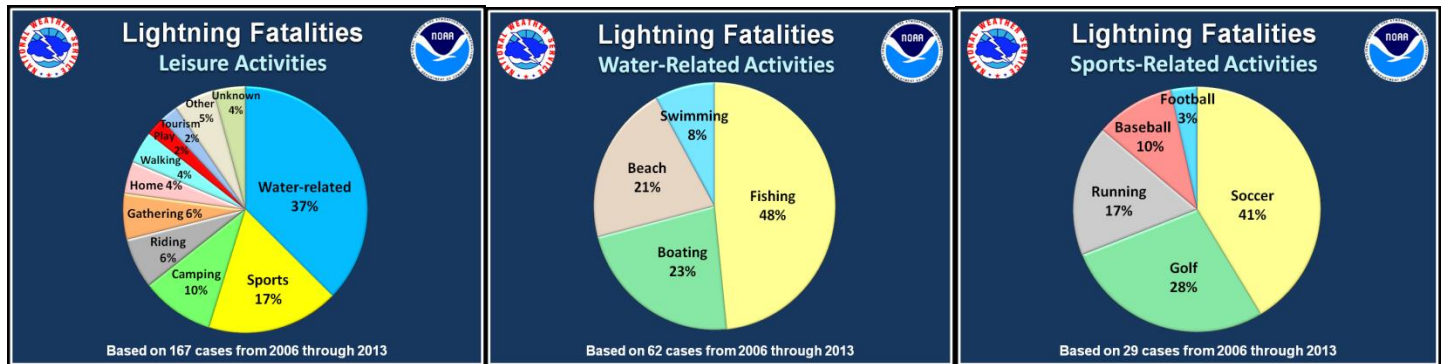
Thunder is a product of lightning. As lightning moves between the ground and thunderstorm, the air around the flash heats rapidly, to temperatures as high as 50,000°F – a temperature hotter than the surface of the sun. This sudden heating creates expansion of the air around the lightning bolt at speeds greater than the speed of sound. The expanding air breaks the sound barrier resulting in the explosive sound we know as thunder. Thunder is really just another form of a sonic boom.

Thunder travels at the speed of sound, which is roughly 1 mile every 5 seconds. You can determine how far away a flash of lightning is by counting the number of seconds that pass after observing a lightning bolt. For every 5 seconds that elapse, the lightning is one mile away. For example, if it takes 15 seconds for the thunder to reach you, then the lightning strike occurred about three miles away.

A "Bolt from the Blue" lightning strike is a flash which travels a relatively large distance in clear air away from the parent thunderstorm and then strikes the ground. These lightning flashes have been

documented more than 25 miles away from the thunderstorm cloud. These events can be especially dangerous, as they appear to come from “clear blue sky.”

[Link: 5 Ways Lightning Strikes People](#)



Nearly half of all lightning deaths occur in open areas. Many are struck when they go under a tree to keep dry during a storm. Outdoor water activities such as swimming, boating and fishing are equally as dangerous. Therefore, when thunderstorms are approaching, avoid outdoor activities as if your life depends on it – because it does! A good rule of thumb to remember is that if you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning. Being observant when outside is your first line of defense with lightning. A darkening cloud building in the sky is often the first sign that lightning could occur.

The main tip to remember regarding lightning safety is: being outside is never safe during a thunderstorm!

At the first sign of lightning or sound of thunder, you should immediately head inside an enclosed structure and remain away from windows. Even while inside, it is important to stay away from windows and not use any corded electrical devices or running water from faucets. If you can't make it inside when a thunderstorm approaches, the most dangerous place to be is in an open area. Equally as dangerous is being caught over the open water of a lake or ocean when a thunderstorm is in the area. This is because lightning will tend to strike the tallest object in the area. This also why standing under tall trees is very dangerous. When you can't make it to an enclosed building, your next best course of action is to get into a vehicle with a hard-topped roof.

Although the National Weather Service does not issue specific lightning warnings, products such as the Hazardous Weather Outlook can indicate the threat levels for lightning in your area on any given day.

[NWS Mobile Daily Graphical Hazards](#)
[NWS Tallahassee Daily Graphical Hazards](#)
[NWS Jacksonville Daily Hazards](#)
[NWS Melbourne Daily Graphical Hazards](#)
[NWS Tampa Daily Graphical Hazards](#)
[NWS Miami Daily Graphical Hazards](#)
[NWS Key West Daily Hazards](#)

National Lightning Safety Awareness Week is June 18-24, 2017 and more information about lightning hazards and what you can do to protect yourself and others can be found at

www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov and www.floridadisaster.org.



Tuesday's focus will be on marine hazards and rip currents.