



LIGHTNING SAFETY



Lightning is one of the most underrated severe weather hazards, yet it ranks as the second-leading weather killer in the United States. There are thousands of lightning strikes every day. Victims of lightning can suffer serious health injuries such as loss of consciousness, amnesia and burns.

The 30-30 Lightning Rule

Use the 30-30 rule to determine the threat of lightning in your area.

- 30 seconds: Count the seconds between seeing lightning and hearing thunder. If this time is less than 30 seconds, lightning is still a potential threat. Seek shelter immediately.
- 30 minutes: After a lightning flash, wait 30 minutes before leaving shelter. Half of all lightning deaths occur after a storm passes. Stay in a safe area until you are sure the threat has passed.

Lightning Safety Action

- Avoid open high ground and isolated large trees.
- Avoid water (swimming pools, lakes and rivers) beaches and boats.
- Seek shelter inside a building or a car, but not a convertible or golf cart.
- Stay away from doors, windows, and metal objects such as pipes or faucets.
- Stay off the telephone or electrical devices.
- Unplug electronic equipment.

Lightning can cause damage to your property. A power outage can also result causing electrical surges which can destroy the electronic devices in your home.

Protect Your Home Against Electrical Surges

A whole house surge protection system can be installed on the electric meter or the electrical panel to help protect the appliances and electronic equipment in your house such as computers, TVs and DVDs. Contact your local electric company or a qualified electrician to install this device in your electric panel.

An optional protection is a Surge Protective Device (SPD) which protects electronic equipment and electrical appliances from all but the most severe surges or direct strikes. They should be installed at all protected items. A lightning protection system will not protect a home from electrical damage or fire from lightning entering through the telephone, cable or electrical lines to the house.

Lightning Protection Systems

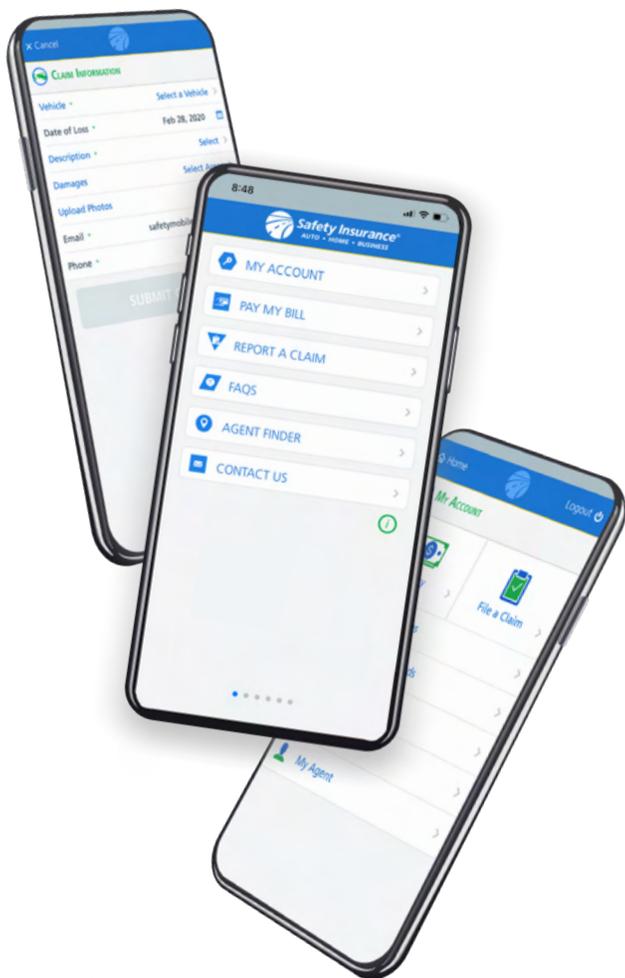
- Installation of lightning rods on your roof and on the trees surrounding your home redirects the lightning path. Choose a system that meets Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requirements.
- Some systems provide a direct path for lightning to follow to the ground rather than through the house structure and its wiring. Consult a qualified contractor for installation.



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