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Public Information Statement
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From: Michael J. Szkil
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 Office of Climate, Water and Weather Services

Subject: 2013 National Lightning Safety Awareness Week: June 23-30, 2013

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors

The National Weather Service's 13th National Lightning Safety Awareness Week campaign occurs June 23-30, 2013.

The 2013 campaign reminds people that no place outside is safe when thunderstorms are in the area. Most lightning strike victims are close to safe shelter, but wait too long to get there. If you can hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you. The NWS motto is, "When thunder roars, go indoors."

Prior to the lightning safety campaign, lightning killed an average of 73 people each year in the United States. Since the NWS launched the campaign, the average has dropped to 37. This is great news, but there are still too many deaths and injuries. Each year, hundreds of people are injured, many with permanent nerve damage, hearing loss and other serious side effects.

Lightning deaths and injuries occur most frequently in open areas and under trees. Planning for lightning is crucial when you are outdoors, especially when camping, fishing, hiking, at the beach or playing sports.

People are especially vulnerable to lightning strikes when a storm is approaching or exiting their area. Lightning can strike more than 10 miles away from a thunderstorm.

Lightning tips, statistics, brochures, educational shows and more are available on the NWS lightning safety website at:

<http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov>

What You Need to Know About Lightning:

- No place outside is safe when thunderstorms are in the area.
- If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you.
- When you hear thunder, immediately move to safe shelter. A substantial building with electricity or plumbing or an enclosed, metal-topped vehicle with windows up.
- Stay in a safe shelter at least 30 minutes after you hear the last sound of thunder.
- If someone is struck by lightning, they are safe to touch and need immediate Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) if they are not breathing or are unresponsive.

Indoor Lightning Safety Tips:

- Stay off corded phones, computers and other electrical equipment.
- Avoid plumbing, including sinks, baths and faucets.
- Stay away from windows and doors, and stay off porches.
- Do not lie on concrete floors, and do not lean against concrete walls.

Last Resort Outdoor Risk Reduction Tips:

If you are caught outside with no safe shelter anywhere nearby, the following actions may reduce your risk:

- Immediately get off elevated areas such as hills, mountain ridges or peaks.
- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Never shelter under an isolated tree.
- Never use a cliff or rocky overhang for shelter.
- Immediately get out and away from ponds, lakes and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity (barbed wire fences, power lines, windmills, etc.).

If you have any comments or questions regarding this Public Service Announcement, please contact:

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