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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SAFETY IN THUNDERSTORMS

The number of persons killed by lightning is very small in comparison with the total number of fatalities due to accidents. In the United States, for example, the census reports show an annual average of about 500 lightning fatalities, while in a recent year there were more than 90,000 fatal accidents of all kinds. The actual danger from lightning is, in general, very small, except under certain circumstances of exposure out of doors, which, as a rule, can be avoided. Within buildings of considerable size and dwelling houses of modern construction cases of death or injury by lightning are relatively rare. They are more frequent within small unprotected buildings of older type. Isolated schoolhouses and churches, where numbers may congregate during thunderstorms, present a considerable hazard if unprotected by lightning rods.

The United States Bureau of Standards has published the following rules for avoiding danger from this cause:

Do not go out of doors or remain out during a thunderstorm unless it is necessary. Stay inside of a building where it is dry, preferably away from fireplaces, stoves and other metal objects.

If there is any choice of shelter, choose in the following order: 1. Large metal or metal-frame buildings. 2. Dwellings or other buildings protected against lightning. 3. Large unprotected buildings. 4. Small unprotected buildings.

If remaining out of doors is unavoidable, keep away from small sheds and shelters, if in an exposed location, isolated trees, wire fences, hilltops and wide open spaces. Seek shelter in dense woods, a grove of trees, a cave, a depression in the ground, a deep valley or canyon, or the foot of a steep or overhanging cliff.
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