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Jan. 10, 1940 Science Service Meteorologist

Winter thunderstorms! While thunderstorms are essentially warm weather phenomena they do occur in winter. The necessary condition for a thunderstorm is a rising column of moist air. In winter the air lying over a cold land surface becomes itself cold and hence very stable and does not rise. However, in winter there are occasionally conditions when relatively warm air is forced to rise, as when a cold air mass underruns a warmer mass; or when a cold overrunning mass traps a warmer mass which then becomes unstable and is forced to rise. In both cases snow flurries and lightning may result.
