**LIGHTNING AND THUNDERSTORMS**

**To judge how close lightning is:**

* Count the seconds between the flash and thunder. One second represents about 300 metres.
* Less than 30 seconds
  + the storm is less than 10 km away and there is an 80 percent chance the next strike will happen within that 10 km
  + take shelter in a building, automobile or a low-lying area

Lightning may strike several kilometres away from the parent cloud, take precautions even if the thunderstorm is not directly overhead.

**PROCEDURE - 30-30 rule**

* Take appropriate shelter (building or vehicle) when you can count 30 seconds or less between lightning and thunder.
* Remain sheltered for 30 minutes after the last thunder.

***If you cannot get into a vehicle or building:***

* Avoid being the highest point in an open area. Get off the equipment and move to a depressed area such as a ditch or culvert.
* If you are in the open, do not lie flat. Crouch down with your feet close together and your head down (the "leap-frog" position). By minimizing your contact with the ground, you reduce the risk of electrocution by a ground charge.
* If you are in a group in the open, spread out, keep people several yards apart.
* Avoid holding metal object (ie. hand tools, soil corer, quadrat). Take off safety shoes with metal toes.
* Never go under a tree
* Do not use your cell phone

***In a vehicle:***

* Do not park near or under trees or other tall objects which may fall over during a storm.
* Be aware of downed power lines that may touch your car. You are safe inside the car, but may receive a shock if you step outside.
* Keep alert for flash floods, sometimes caused by heavy rainfall, if seeking shelter in a ditch or low lying area.
* *Note:* Persons who have been struck by lightning receive an electrical shock but do not carry an electrical charge and can be safely helped.