

Advisories for Lightning

Lightning in India start with Pre-monsoon during March / April and followed by intense lightning during the peak period of South West monsoon (June-July) and also the end of south west monsoon. The current year monsoon withdrawal is delayed, so that the next fortnight is expected to be very critical. Therefore, it is advised to take appropriate measures as below:

- State governments should update and customize the State Action Plan as per NDMA Guidelines and ensure its implementation of the plan along with Inter-agency coordination
- Action Plan of the State may be circulated to all Collectors & HoDs. Instructions may be issued to line Departments concerned and the District Collectors for implementation.
- Implement assessment, preparedness and mitigation measures and prepare detailed department-wise SOPs
- Identify vulnerable places and protect public property/infrastructure from damage from lightning
- Review and update precautionary measures and procedures
- Promote installation of lightning conductors / arresters in schools, industries, public and private buildings or local innovative techniques
- Create a network of community-based early warning systems
- Dissemination of specific early warning information to the public through print/electronic/social and other mass media like SMS, Whatsapp at the local level
- Set up alternative or emergency communication systems and Ensure early restoration of electricity supply to essential services during emergencies and restoration of electric supply at the earliest
- Ensure quick restoration of road connectivity and access to vulnerable areas
- Disseminate Do's and Don'ts for general public and enable them to access safe places
- Extensive IEC campaigns to generate public awareness through print, electronic and social media

Awareness generation Activities

Awareness campaigns should be carried out based on communication strategy and research insights. IEC activities should be planned at national, State and local levels.

A. State level:

- Mass awareness campaigns involving Print, TV, Radio, Social Media, etc in local languages;
- Special list of Do's and Don'ts and safety tips for weaker and vulnerable sections of society (e.g. women, children, poor, elderly and differently abled);
- Special list of Do's and Don'ts for animal and livestock safety;
- Encourage line departments of the State Governments and local authorities to widely disseminate Do's and Don'ts.
- Develop media and communication strategies and plans considering local socio-economic and behavioural factors;
- Involve recognised artists of the State, such as folk singers, dancers, and other performers for stronger recall value;
- Conduct regular awareness programmes in all districts;
- Conduct regular training programmes for inter-personal communication activities.

B. Local level: The local authorities, due to their proximity to the affected population, are in the best position to ensure the last mile delivery of messages. They may –

- Conduct regular inter-personal communication activities;
- Demonstrate the safety tips to the vulnerable population in their local language, using local customs, cultural aspects and behaviour patterns; Local artists and art forms may be utilized for entertainment-based education programmes; Extensive use of IEC tools and materials (such as flyers, calendars, comic books, etc.) should be made available for people for reference;
- Strengthen and involve local communities such as RWAs, Municipal bodies, NGOs, Panchayati Raj Institutions, *Anganwadis*, *Gram sabhas*, Medical professionals and other local bodies;
- Give special emphasis to dissemination in locations of "closed homogeneous groups" such as schools, colleges, offices, cinemas, etc.
- Carry out Out-of-Home campaigns using banners, posters, billboards, etc.
- Carry out special awareness programmes for the differently abled.

LIGHTNING: Do's and Don'ts

Lightning

Darkening skies, thunder, hair standing up on the back of your neck or tingling skin mean lightning is imminent.

Before

- Cut down or trim trees that may be in danger of falling on your home.
- An important lightning safety guide is the 30-30 rule. After you see lightning, start counting to 30. If you hear thunder before you reach 30, go indoors. Suspend activities for at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.
- Always keep the earthing working to avoid damage to electrical equipment.
- Consider buying surge protectors, lightning rods, or a lightning protection system to protect your home, appliances, and electronic devices.

During

(A) If indoors

- Unplug all electrical equipment before the storm arrives. Don't use corded telephones, electrical devices, chargers, etc.
- Stay away from windows and doors; stay off verandas.
- Don't touch plumbing and metal pipes. Do not use running water.

(B) If outdoors

- Get inside a house/building. Stay away from structures with tin roofs/metal sheets.
- If caught under the open sky, crouch. Don't lie down or place your hands on the ground.
- Don't take shelter near/under trees. Spread out; don't stand in a crowd. Stay clear of water bodies.
- If you are outside, seek refuge in a car or grounded building when lightning or thunder begins.
- Stay put if you are inside a car/bus/covered vehicle.
- Don't use metallic objects; stay away from power/telephone lines.
- Get out of water - pools, lakes, small boats on water bodies.
- Avoid hilltops, open fields and beaches.

After

Watch out for fallen power lines and trees. Report them immediately.

Treating the affected

- Administer CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation), if needed.
- Seek medical attention immediately.

***Note:** States may customize the contents of the Do's and Don'ts for their own use depending on their local experiences and best practices. Further action needs to be undertaken by respective State Governments.