

Lightning kills two or three Mississippians each year. Several others are injured by lightning strikes. Nationally, the average toll is around 80 deaths and 500 injuries. In an average year, lightning will claim more victims than tornadoes or hurricanes. Every thunderstorm contains this potential killer. Whether it is the large, springtime severe thunderstorm or the more common afternoon summer variety, that electrical charge (which may reach 100 million volts) is always present and searching for the path of the least resistance to complete the circuit. It might strike you, an isolated tree or an object in the open. Keep in mind that you do not have to be standing directly beneath a cloud to be zapped. If you feel your hair begin to stand on end, lightning may be about to strike. Drop to your knees and bend forward, putting your hands on your knees. Do not lie flat on the ground. Remember, there is no truth to the old myth that "lightning never strikes twice."