

Risk Management Environmental Health & Safety

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Web:

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Department Phone – 409.984.6554

Contacts:

Gary Rash – AVP of Risk Management
Phone: 409.882.3902

[Email](#)

Department Contacts

Risk Management
Dorothy Beard - Director
Phone: 409.984.6554
[Email](#)

EHS
Jeoffery Blueitt - Director
Phone: 409.257.0056
[Email](#)

EHS & Building Safety Specialists
[Landon Carr](#)
[Tracielynn Walters](#)
[Freddie Young](#)

EHS & Lab Safety Specialist
[Nathan Macy](#)

Fire Specialist
[Roshanda Guidry](#)

Administrative Assistant
[Crystal Guilbeau](#)

actions lead to many of the lightning deaths and injuries.

The most important message is if you hear thunder, you are in danger. Remember: “When thunder roars, go indoors.”

Lightning: What You Need to Know

- **No Place** outside is safe when thunderstorms are in the area.
- If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you.
- When you hear thunder, immediately move to safe shelter – a substantial building with electricity or plumbing, or an enclosed metal-topped vehicle with windows closed.
- Stay in safe shelter at least 30 minutes after you hear the last sound of thunder.

Indoor Lightning Safety

- Stay off corded phones, computers, and other electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity.
- Avoid plumbing, including sinks, baths, and faucets.
- Stay away from windows and doors and stay off porches.
- Do not lie on concrete floors and do not lean against concrete walls.

Last Resort Outdoor Tips

If you are caught outside **with no safe shelter anywhere nearby** the following actions may reduce the risk:

- Immediately get off elevated areas such as hills, mountain ridges or peaks.
- Crouch low to the ground, with as little of body touching the ground as possible, with hands over head and remain still.
- Never shelter under an isolated tree.

- Never use a cliff or rocky overhang for shelter.
- Get out and away from ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity (barbed wire fences, power lines, windmills, etc.).

2 Safety Spotlight: Beat the Heat – Stay Safe This Summer

As Southeast Texas enters peak summer, high temperatures and humidity create dangerous conditions for outdoor work. Heat-related illnesses can develop quickly and severely impact employee health, safety, and productivity—but they are preventable.

Why It Matters

In our region, heat index values can exceed 100°F regularly, increasing the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heavy workloads, protective clothing, and confined work areas add to the hazard.

Key Prevention Tips

1. Hydrate Early and Often

- Drink water throughout the shift—don’t wait until you’re thirsty
- Avoid excessive caffeine or sugary drinks
- Aim for about 1 cup of water every 15–20 minutes during heavy work

2. Take Scheduled Breaks

- Use shaded or air-conditioned areas for recovery
- Follow established work/rest cycles, especially during peak heat (afternoons)

1 Lightning Safety

Historically, the most lightning deaths occur in June and July. There is no safe place outside when thunderstorms are in the area. If you hear thunder, you are likely within striking distance of the storm.

Too many people wait far too long to get to a safe place when thunderstorms approach. Unfortunately, these delayed

3. Dress Smart

- Wear light-colored, breathable clothing when feasible
- Use cooling towels, neck wraps, or fans where permitted

4. Acclimatize Gradually

- New or returning workers should build up heat tolerance over 7–14 days
- Supervisors should closely monitor workers during this period

5. Watch for Warning Signs

- **Heat Exhaustion:** dizziness, heavy sweating, nausea, headache
- **Heat Stroke (medical emergency):** confusion, lack of sweating, high body temperature
 - If heat stroke is suspected: call emergency services immediately and begin cooling efforts

6. Look Out for Each Other

- Use the buddy system to check for symptoms
- Speak up if something doesn't feel right—early action saves lives

Supervisor Reminder

Ensure ready access to water, enforce rest breaks, adjust workloads, and monitor weather/heat index daily.

Bottom Line:

Heat safety is everyone's responsibility. By staying hydrated, taking breaks, and recognizing the signs early, we can prevent injuries and keep everyone safe during Southeast Texas' extreme summer conditions.

Stay cool. Stay alert. Stay safe.

3 Remember – STOP, DROP, AND ROLL Still Works

As children, most of us learned and practiced the **stop, drop, and roll** technique. As an adult, this method is still good for us. If we or our clothes catch fire – **stop, drop, and roll**. Stop, drop to the ground while covering the face with our hands, and roll over and over (back and forth) until the fire is out.



If it's not possible to stop, drop, and roll, use a fire blanket to help smolder the flames.

