



## NORTH BAY REGIONAL LABOUR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

# LIGHTNING SAFETY

- 2007: Two workers were struck and killed by lightning in March 2007. They were standing at their work area before beginning work when lightning struck. A third worker, approximately five feet away, sustained no injuries. The workers were located at the lowest section of the roof on the building.
- 2004: Eight workers on a New Brunswick construction site suffered shock when lightning hit the steel structure they were building.
- 2001: In Kingsville, a town south of Windsor, a construction worker survived a lightning strike. The worker was among a group working during a morning storm. Fellow workers reported seeing a large flash as he was struck on the head and thrown about a metre. He was standing next to a generator when hit, and the inside of his hard hat was apparently burned.

**The storm may develop quickly and arrive with little warning.  
Here are some basic precautions:**

- If you're on a roof or ladder and you hear a storm coming, **get down to the ground**.
- **Count the time difference** between seeing the lightning and hearing the thunder. Every second represents about 300 metres. So six seconds is about 2 km. Lightning can reach you even if the storm is 16 km away and there's a clear sky above you.
- **Use the 30-30 rule**: seek shelter when lightning is 30 seconds away or closer. Stay inside until 30 minutes have passed since you last hear thunder or see lightning.
- **When inside**, stay away from windows or doors and avoid contact with electrical equipment, metal walls, and other conductors.
- **If you're out in the open** and you can't get inside, stay away from trees, hills, and water. Make yourself as small a target as possible but never lie down on the ground. Instead, crouch down in a baseball catcher's stance, put your hands on your knees, and duck your head.

(Sources: *Canadian Occupational Health and Safety News*, 23 August 2004; National Lightning Safety Institute - [www.lightningsafety.com](http://www.lightningsafety.com))



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