

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



March 2, 2015

Protection from Severe  
Weather



As the saying goes, “If you won’t a little sunshine, you have to put up with a little rain.” So goes Mississippi, if you like the summer heat (I love it), you have to put up with a little wintry weather.

To put up with that wintry weather, we need to take precautions to protect ourselves, which is the subject of our newsletter this week.

## **STORMY WEATHER CAN BE HAZARDOUS-**

- ✓ High winds, heavy rains, lightning, and hail can cause serious injury to people, as well as plants and crops.
- ✓ Tornadoes and hurricanes are just two examples of severe weather conditions that can cause serious harm. others include:
  - heavy rains, resulting in flooding
  - lightning, which can result in fires, severe burns, and even death.
  - Strong winds, which can result in flying debris and downed electrical power lines.

## **PROTECT YOURSELF DURING SEVERE WEATHER-**

- ✓ Immediately alert your supervisor if the sky turns dark or the weather appears threatening. Your supervisor will give you instructions on where to seek shelter. Don’t return to your job site until you’re told that the weather is clear.  
(Locations to dodge the inclement weather should be arranged and settled on by the station management).  
(Management should let the employees know when the weather threat has passed before they return to their work sites.
- ✓ If you are in an open field when the weather turns severe and there is no shelter nearby, lie flat in the nearest ditch or slough. Shield your head with your hands. Be on the lookout for flash floods.
- ✓ If you are in the woods during severe weather, look for shelter under a thick growth of small trees.
- ✓ Stay clear of metal objects, like farm equipment, metal and wire fences.
- ✓ Don’t seek shelter under an isolated tree in an open field, and don’t seek shelter in a small shed.
- ✓ Stay off the telephone, unless you need it for an emergency.  
Telephone wires can conduct electrical current.

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## **Lightning Can be Deadly-**

- Lightning injures or kills more folks in the USA than hurricanes or tornadoes.
- Lightning is also the major cause of fires in barns, livestock buildings and other agricultural structures. The plastic sheeting used in many greenhouses is very toxic when it burns. If you, by chance, are in a greenhouse and it is struck by lightning and starts to burn, “duh,” get out immediately and find other shelter.
- Lightning is very unpredictable. It has no choice of locations, it will strike anywhere. It will strike even if it isn’t raining.
- If you hear thunder, you can be assured that lightning is close behind it. Alert your supervisor and follow his instructions for seeking shelter.
- Lightning can hurt you in several different ways:
  - ~ by a direct strike to you.
  - ~ by striking the ground close to you.
  - ~ by striking an object that you are touching.

## **Lightning Safety Tips-**

- ✓ Avoid standing on a hilltop or under an isolated tall tree.
- ✓ Stay away from metal objects. If you are wearing metal jewelry, any other metal objects, take it off!
- ✓ Refrain from using power tools or any other electrical equipment.
- ✓ If you are indoors, stay away from water and from open windows or doors, if you are outdoors, stay away from standing water.
- ✓ If you are caught in an open field and think lightning is about to strike, crouch down as close to the ground as possible. Put your hands on your knees, and your head between your knees. Don’t put your hands on the ground.
- ✓ If you or a co-worker is struck by lightning, immediately call your supervisor and have another employee to call for emergency help.

## **Key Points-**

- **Seek shelter in large buildings during a storm.**
- **Stay away from tractors, other farm equipment, a wire fences, and metal pipes.**
- **Get immediate medical help if a co-worker is struck by lightning.**