

# Emergency Preparedness Fact Sheet

## Thunderstorms

The typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter and lasts an average of 30 minutes. Despite their size, all thunderstorms are dangerous. Of the estimated 100,000 thunderstorms that occur each year in the United States, about 10% are classified as severe.

- ◆ There is no safe place outside when a thunderstorm is nearby.
- ◆ If you are outdoors and can hear thunder, you can also be struck by lightning.
- ◆ Avoid open areas and stay away from isolated tall trees, towers or utility poles.
- ◆ Stay away from metal conductors such as wires or fences.

## Did you know?

- ◆ 1,800 thunderstorms occur at any moment around the world—that's 16 million a year!



### Watch vs. Warning

*A severe thunderstorm watch means that the potential exists for the development of thunderstorms which may produce large hail or damaging winds. When a watch is issued, you should go about your normal activities, but pay attention for further updates and possible warnings.*

*A severe thunderstorm warning means that a severe thunderstorm is occurring or is imminent based on doppler-radar information. You should move indoors to a place of safety.*

**September is Emergency Preparedness Month.**

**The Department of Emergency Services is encouraging all residents to read themselves and their families for any type of severe weather that Allegheny County may encounter.**

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