

Lightning - How Does It Act

Lightning is not predictable. The saying “ lightning never strikes twice in the same place” is like saying a lead brick won’t sink if thrown into a lake. Tall buildings, radio and TV transmission towers, etc. are struck repeatedly by lightning. Lightning is indiscriminate and will seek whatever path offers the least resistance. Lightning is simply an electrical charge trying to reach a point where it can equalize its potential. The key to not having your equipment damaged by a direct strike is to not be in the path lightning has chosen.

The risk of a direct lightning strike can be calculated by using the two page “Risk Assessment Guide” that follows this page and the detailed “Lightning Risk Evaluation Guide”.

The 26 page detailed information following this page and the “Guides” will provide you with a very detailed description of the following listed subjects:

- 1. Thunderstorm frequency**
- 2. Lightning protection application examples**
- 3. How lightning works**
- 4. How much power lightning contains**
- 5. How long lightning lasts**
- 6. Example of how often lightning occurs**
- 7. Life saving suggestions**
- 8. Outline of auxiliary personal equipment**
- 9. Outline rescue procedures - After Lightning Strikes**
- 10. The theory of lightning**
- 11. Outline lightning protection for buildings**

If you would like to learn more about lightning protection, standards, and codes, you may wish to contact these sources. Most telephone yellow pages will list under “Lightning Protection”, companies that specialize in the installation of lightning protection products and systems. These firms are often expert in the installation of grounding systems. Be sure and check the references of any firm you consider for lightning protection equipment and systems.

Lightning Protection Trade Associations

United Lightning Protection Association, Inc.
Cooper Road Box 329A
Millerton, New York, 12546
Phone: (800) 668-ULPA
Fax: (518) 789-4902

Lightning Protection Institute
53 West Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL

Code References & Standards

Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.

Reference:

Lightning Protection Components UL 96
Installation Requirements for Lightning Protection Systems, UL96A
(due to be revised & re-published soon)

National Fire Protection Association

Reference:

NFPA/ANSI 78
Lightning Protection Code

If you decide to install a lightning protection system, be sure it is inspected and UL certified. This will normally qualify you for insurance discounts and insure that you have a properly installed system. Always deal with professionals when purchasing any type of lightning protection system.

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