



ILA-USMX JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

OSH Circular 2025-08 (01 August 2025)

LIGHTNING!

Questions presented to the ILA~USMX Joint Safety Committee during the Summer months almost always include inquiries on advice related to what to do in the event of lightning storms. We're happy to provide a response here.

Like workers in all occupations who routinely perform services in the outdoors, some longshore and marine terminal workers can potentially be exposed to the extreme dangers of lightning strikes. With that in mind, we can offer the following information and advice:

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) advises that nowhere outside is safe when thunderstorms are in your area. And while the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) has not issued any specific standards dealing directly with the hazards associated with lightning strikes, the risks are pretty obvious. OSHA cautions employers and employees that while no specific standards are on the books, the agency will cite employers for alleged violations of the [OSH Act's General Duty Clause](#) if and when workers are exposed to lightning strike hazards.

OSHA offers a discussion of the related lightning strike hazards in a dedicated publication. Here's a link to it: <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3863.pdf>

Want to see some statistics? Here's a link to OSHA's database of workplace lightning strike fatalities (2012 through 2023): [Fatal Workplace Lightning Strikes](#)

Finally, we can offer a map of the U.S. setting out lightning strike fatalities [2006-2023]:



Got an OSH-related question? Write to the JSC at: blueoceana@optonline.net

Working Together for the Benefit of All

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