

Mt. Shasta Vista Fire Co.

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Newsletter

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The fire company and the newly formed Mt. Shasta Vista Volunteer Fire Co. Auxiliary thank the MSV property owners association and members for their much appreciated support. And, particular thanks to the members for their generous donations to help with the startup costs of the auxiliary. Our auxiliary will eventually need to become incorporated and apply for nonprofit status, which is time consuming and fairly expensive. In the meantime, the auxiliary is using an umbrella company for the corporation and nonprofit status (making your donations tax deductible). The name of the company is the Northern Calif. Resource Center (NCRC). For those of you that would like to help the auxiliary, donations are much appreciated. Your check payee should be NCRC with a note on the check memo line that it is for the MSVFC auxiliary. Please mail to the fire company address above.

Lightning Safety

Lightning is an especially dangerous element during the dry summer season in Siskiyou County. The 1993 Agee report noted that the Siskiyou exhibited the highest occurrence of lightning activity in the Pacific Northwest, with twice the number of lightning ignitions that occurs in the Cascades or Olympic Mountains.

You're grilling hamburgers on the backyard patio. As you flip them over, you notice that the sky getting dark. Pretty soon you see a flash of lightning. Then you hear a clap of thunder. What should you do? What precautions should you take? Thunder and lightning storms are a fairly common occurrence. But it's important to realize just how dangerous lightning can be and the damage it can do.

From 2002 to 2005, the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) stated that U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 31,400 fires started by lightning per year. The fires caused an estimated average of 68 deaths, 57 injuries and \$213 million in property damage per year. The National Weather Service reported that lightning strikes caused 47 deaths in 2006. Most of the victims were outside when lightning struck.

To keep everyone safe, NFPA and Mt. Shasta Vista Fire Company recommend that you follow these safety guidelines:

- Unplug appliances and other electrical items, such as computers, and turn off air conditioners. If you are unable to unplug them, turn them off.
- Follow the 30-30 rule: When you see lightning, count 30 seconds until you hear thunder. If that time is 30 seconds or less, the thunderstorm is within six miles and is dangerous. Seek shelter immediately. The threat of lightning continues longer than most people think. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder before leaving your shelter.
- If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance of lightning. Seek shelter immediately.
- Stop outdoor activities at the first clap of thunder and get inside a house, large building, or a hard-topped vehicle.
- When inside, stay off corded phones, computers, and other electronic equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity or plumbing. Avoid washing your hands, showering, bathing, doing laundry, or washing dishes.
- If you are in open water, go to land and seek shelter immediately.
- If you feel your hair stand on end, indicating that lightning is about to strike, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands over your head between your knees. Make yourself the smallest target possible to minimize your contact with the ground. Do not lie flat on the ground. This is a last resort when a building or hard-topped vehicle is not available.
- If a person is struck by lightning, call 911 and get medical care immediately. Lightning strike victims carry no electrical charge; attend to them immediately. Check the person's breathing, heartbeat and pulse.

These simple precautions during a lightning storm can save lives and decrease the chances of injury and damage.