

Lightning: leave time to reach shelter

Talk 24 of 52 | Week 24 | Health

Leader: adapt this talk to today's electrical work and site procedures. See the educational-use and liability notice on page 2.

START THE CONVERSATION

An electrical crew is installing outdoor lighting when a storm develops. The plan needs to work before the storm reaches the site, not after workers are already exposed on lifts or open ground.

KEY TALKING POINTS

1. Identify who monitors conditions and communicates the decision to stop outdoor work. Establish the shelter and return-to-work process before starting. Workers should not have to debate whether to finish one more fixture while the storm approaches.
2. Use the designated safe shelter, such as a substantial enclosed building. Where suitable buildings are unavailable, follow the site plan for fully enclosed hard-topped vehicles. Open shelters, trees, and exposed platforms are not substitutes for a proper lightning shelter.
3. Electrical job example: lowering a lift, securing loose material, and reaching shelter all take time. Include that time in planning. The crew's stopping decision should account for the actual access route and equipment rather than assuming everyone can immediately step indoors.
4. Confirm how isolated workers receive the warning. Someone inside a noisy work area or wearing hearing protection may not hear a shouted instruction. Agree on the communication method and a way to confirm that every member of the crew has received it.
5. Discuss a route blocked by a delivery or another contractor. Identify an approved alternative before it is needed. Do not send workers through a newly hazardous area simply because it is the shortest path to the planned shelter.
6. After the storm, wait for the site's authorized return decision. Review changed conditions such as water, damaged temporary equipment, loose material, or altered ground. Do not automatically resume the same electrical task with the assumption that only the weather has changed.
7. Use this briefing to identify one practical improvement: better warning communication, a closer suitable shelter, or clearer directions. Record who will resolve it. A written plan is useful only when the crew can carry it out from today's actual work location.

ASK THE CREW

1. How long will it take our crew to reach suitable shelter?
2. How will every worker receive the stop instruction?

BEFORE WORK STARTS

Confirm monitoring, communication, shelter, and return-to-work arrangements before outdoor electrical work.

OSHA SOURCES / FURTHER READING

OSHA: Lightning safety

Attendance & action record

Lightning: leave time to reach shelter

Date: _____ Leader: _____

Company / jobsite: _____

Site hazards and controls discussed:

Follow-up action / responsible person / due date:

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Participant name	Signature / acknowledgment

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