Governor Ted Strickland

American Red Cross                                    Ohio Department of Education
Emergency Management Association of Ohio             Ohio Department of Health
National Weather Service                             Ohio Department of Insurance
Ohio Citizen Corps                                   Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Department of Aging                             Ohio Emergency Management Agency
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal       Ohio Insurance Institute
Ohio News Network

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### GOVERNOR STRICKLAND ENCOURAGES WEATHER SAFETY AND PREPAREDNESS DURING NATIONAL LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK, JUNE 24-30, 2007

**COLUMBUS, OH** – Governor Ted Strickland, in coordination with the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness, is reminding every Ohioan to be cautious and safe, especially when there is a greater likelihood for both lightning and severe thunderstorms.

"During these warm summer months, I encourage you and your family to take advantage of Ohio's tremendous recreational resources," said Governor Strickland. "Please remember, though, to keep alert any risk from severe weather."

In conjunction with the National Weather Service's proclamation of National Lightning Safety Awareness Week, Governor Strickland has issued a resolution proclaiming June 24-30, 2007 as "Lightning Safety Awareness Week" in the state of Ohio.

This year is the nation's fourth annual promotion of National Lightning Safety Awareness Week. The purpose of the week is to help safeguard people from the hazards of lightning and to lower deaths and injuries due to lightning strikes. According to the National Weather Service, nationwide in 2006, there were 47 confirmed deaths due to lightning strikes and 246 confirmed injuries. Because lightning usually claims only one or two lives at a time and does not typically cause mass destruction of property, it is underrated as a risk.

The National Weather Service says: "When thunder roars, go indoors!" Other safety and preparedness tips promoted by the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness are as follows:

- Listen to your NOAA Weather Radio or local television or radio station to receive up-to-date information on weather conditions and storm watches and warnings.

- Watch the skies for developing thunderstorms. Thunderstorms are most likely to develop on spring and summer days. Several different processes can start air rising and cause cumulus clouds to form. Eventually, under the proper conditions, these clouds can grow vertically into towering clouds, which is often the first sign of a developing thunderstorm.

- If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. Seek safe shelter immediately. Lightning can strike as far as 10 miles from the area where it is raining. If the sky looks threatening, take shelter before the thunder and rain begin.

- While indoors during a thunder and lightning storm, stay off corded telephones, computers and other electrical equipment that would put you in direct contact with electricity. Avoid water. It is an electrical conductor. Do not shower or wash dishes during storms.

- If you are outside, and a thunderstorm is imminent, stop or avoid outdoor activities and seek shelter immediately. Avoid or stop water activities such as swimming, fishing or boating. Never use solitary trees for shelter. Stay away from all metallic objects such as fences, poles and power lines.

- If a person is struck by lightning, call 911 and seek medial care immediately. It is safe to treat people struck by lightning; they don't carry an electrical charge. Cardiac arrest and irregularities, burns and nerve damage are typical life-threatening injuries when a person is struck. Knowing first aid measures such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) can help lightning-strike victims survive. American Red Cross chapters and local fire departments often offer first aid and CPR classes.

For additional information on lightning safety and severe weather preparedness, go online to: www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov or www.weathersafety.ohio.gov.

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