

LIGHTNING DATA CENTER
MINUTES
AUGUST 10, 2007
ST. ANTHONY CENTRAL HOSPITAL, DENVER, CO
www.stanthonylhc.org

Monthly Quote: “There’s no future in saying it can’t be done”. Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive, Harvey Mackey, p. 295. Ivy Books, New York, 1988.

1. Meeting began at 11:45 AM and adjourned at 1:45 PM.
2. Members present: Foley, Clark, Langford, Gift, Mullan, McDonough, Nibbe, Burrows, Mendez. Folks, I know there were more than nine members present. Yours truly forgot to grab the attendance sheet and write down who was present. So, if you were there, please e-mail me at sclarktoto@aol.com so I can update the minutes accordingly. Other than that, the content will not change.
3. It was announced that Bruce Patton withdrew from being a moderator for LDC meetings in September/October due to other commitments. Ideas are being solicited for the September and October meetings, although as you will soon learn, the greater emphasis for ideas is on the October meeting. Also, Ken will moderate the November and December meetings, and Gil will moderate the January 2008 meeting. Please direct your ideas for the meeting to Mike Foley.
4. This month’s focus was on the Lightning Safety Poster that the LDC is preparing for the U.S. Forest Service, in particular, the wording of the poster. Al Nibbe represented Greg Stewart as Greg could not attend.
5. Ken Langford moderated a line-by-line review of Dick’s and Greg’s posters to vote on the lines that should be added to the final poster. Here, then, are the bullet points we agreed should be added, in no particular order.

Headline: “WARNING: LIGHTNING DANGER!”

If you see lightning, or hear thunder, you are in danger.

Ignoring the threat of lightning means you could be hurt or killed by lightning.

Monitor the sky for storm development and listen for thunder even if clouds cannot be seen.

Avoid being above treeline during a lightning storm.

Do seek stands of tall trees.

[Note to LDC members: There was some debate as to the meaning of “safer location” vs. risk. The example used was: “Is a hiker safer in a stand of trees versus an open space above treeline? The consensus was “yes”, with the idea of getting the hiker to a “safer location” from the open space. What are you thoughts about the idea of “safer location” vs. the risk of getting to that “safer location”?]

Do wait 30 minutes after the last lightning flash before proceeding.

Do spread out approximately 10 steps apart from one another if you are in a group.

Do head to a substantial building or to a fully enclosed vehicle. [Note to LDC members: There was discussion on what we mean by a “substantial building”. Some felt that would be a building with plumbing and/or electrical connections, which would ground the building. Others were not so sure about that. On the flip side, directing hikers to just any old building comes with its own set of problems. It was mentioned that a group of hikers was killed that took shelter in an un-grounded metal shack. So...what is a “substantial” building?]

Don't go under an isolated tree or a small group of trees.

Don't lay flat on the ground. [Note to LDC members: Should the “lightning safe pose” (feet together, crouched over, and hands over the ears) be used here? Some members felt it is better to keep moving to a “safer place” in that it does not matter whether the hiker is 6 feet tall or crouched over in a 4-foot tall curl, due to their thinking the risk of being hit is the same, regardless of height. What do you think?]

If a hiker is struck by lightning, do administer CPR and first aid when it is safe to do so, and call 911.

Disclaimer: The group appeared to agree a disclaimer was needed, but decided to leave that up to the legal team(s).

Please send your comments regarding these points to me at sclarktoto@aol.com by no later than Thursday, September 6, 2007. I will then forward them to Sue Wiggins at that time and have her broadcast them to the group along with the September meeting notice.

6. On behalf of the LDC, I want to thank all who submitted posters, and those who submitted their thoughts regarding the posters.
7. These minutes do not represent official positions of LDC or its members. They simply reflect the comments made at the meeting.
8. Next meeting: Friday, September 14, 2007 at 11:30 AM in the Main Auditorium of St. Anthony Central Hospital.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven E. Clark, Consulting Meteorologist