

LIGHTNING DATA CENTER MINUTES

June 9, 2017
ST. ANTHONY HOSPITAL WEST, LAKEWOOD, CO
www.lightningdatacenter.org

Monthly Quote: “As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.” Ezekiel 1:13-14

1. Members Present: Clark, Langford, Swanson, Yarnell, Wells, Claus, Elder, and a survivor. Meeting began at 11:45 AM and ended at 1:50 PM.
2. Steve Clark said we need to have a meeting solely for creating a lightning strike support group with our survivor present. She has expressed interest in starting such a group. As envisioned, the survivor would be the leader of the support group with LDC members checking in on the meetings from time to time to see how things are going and to help her out a little bit. LDC would help her set up the group and we would attend her first meeting to help get things going. She would be the contact person and the leader of the support group.
3. Steve Clark presented an article about a man struck by lightning in New York. The lightning entered the building, damaged some electronic equipment, and arced from a light switch into his left hand. The article can be found here: <http://www.whec.com/news/man-struck-by-lightning-rochester-office/4506092/>
4. We revisited the case of the lightning strike in Douglas County and revised the Colorado lightning statistics to show for this year 1 fatality and 2 injuries thus far. Initially, we had determined the girl who was knocked off the horse was not a lightning injury. After discussion, we determined her injury was an indirect injury since the horse likely had been spooked by the lightning and/or the thunder and because she suffered a closed head concussion.
5. Phil Yarnell presented the case of a lightning strike to a military contractor at an undisclosed location.

He was at a control panel atop an elevated platform from which a small blimp-like weather balloon was tethered. The tether consisted of 2 coaxial cables, a fiber-optic cable, and a copper wound rope. Lightning hit the balloon and the current came down the tether and onto the control platform. His last recall before the strike was a flash of blue-green light. His first recall after the strike was being 120 feet away from the control panel and walking around. He was seen the next day. He had left shoulder pain. There were elevated CPK levels, indicative of muscle pain. He has not been able to work since. Three months later, he saw an orthopedist complaining of dizziness, headaches, neck pain, and numbness. An MRI was taken of the neck and shoulder and he was given pain killers. The MRI showed a partial abnormality which indicated a partial rotator cuff tear. Surgery was performed on his left shoulder. Bouts of dizziness tend to be followed by headaches, along with neck pain.

Patient is a non-smoker and does not drink.

Patient saw a neurologist, who said patient has a history of injuries and showed elevated muscle enzyme breakdown. He has intractable headaches over his entire head and suffers from chronic pain syndrome. Medications were given for the headaches. On patient's second visit to the neurologist, he said the medications were not working. Blood pressure medications and other pain medications were prescribed. All this occurred 1 year and 4 months after the strike.

Phil said there is tenderness on the back of his neck. His shoulder motion is limited as he could not lift his arm above horizontal. His cervical spine was injured. He has never had any of these problems before. Phil also said there are two components to this patient's illness. There is a physical component with his shoulder injury and odd sensations in his arm. The other component involves neurological, brain and cognitive issues. He has ongoing neuropsychological cognitive dysfunction.

Carl Swanson asked if there was any previous history of lightning strikes at this facility. Phil did not know.

6. Questions, comments, notification of errors, and critiques of these minutes are welcome. Please forward those to Steve Clark at: sclarktoto@gmail.com. Please keep your communications professional and respectful. Communications will be forwarded to the appropriate author(s) of the minutes and addressed accordingly.
7. LDC Disclaimer: These minutes do not represent official positions of the LDC or its members. They simply reflect the comments made at the meeting. Furthermore, the LDC does not implicitly or explicitly recommend or endorse any product or service. Any product or service presented in these minutes is done so for purposes of discussion and analysis. The merit (or lack thereof) is open for the consideration and review by the entire membership.
8. Next meeting: Friday, July 14, 2017, from 11:45 to 1:00 PM at St. Anthony Hospital West. Room: Conference Rooms E & F. Larry Moore and Sheryl Olson will present a case history of a lightning patient seen in the ER.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steven E. Clark, Consulting Meteorologist

Lightning Links

This is a monthly listing of periodicals, websites, and videos about lightning and allied areas from a variety of sources. A headline or description is listed, followed by the link. Please note that some of the links are perishable, which means you'll need to go to the source for the information.

Molineaux, C., 2017: Man Struck by Lightning...Sitting in his Rochester Office. *WHEC.COM*. June 6, 2017. Link: <http://www.whec.com/news/man-struck-by-lightning-rochester-office/4506092/>