

THUNDERSTORM !
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The forecasters are predicting thunderstorms in different parts of the state for this weekend.....and so there are a few things to think about while we are riding.

Lightning has a tendency to strike the tallest thing around. When we are riding down the middle of the road.....we are probably the tallest thing around. Your rubber tires will *not* insulate you and keep you from being electrocuted.

If the sound of the thunder and the flash of lightning are one-second apart.....the lightning is about one mile away from you. This is WAY too close for you to be outside. A building is the best thing to be in.....Hiding under a big tree will keep me out of the rain, but I am now standing under...*the tallest thing around*and have become part of the perfect lightning target "KABOOM" ! It would seem that in the middle of a concrete highway overpass would be pretty safe from lightning..... The only hazard I have heard referred to with hiding out under overpasses is the threat of cars not seeing you and riding into you. One rider said that you would probably be more visible near the far end of the overpass where you are back-lit from the light outside.

Here is probably the best info I have seen concerning thunderstorms, riding, and motorcycles:

DO NOT ride into a lightning storm. If you absolutely cannot get to a safe building or vehicle, here are some last resort choices. If you wait out the storm below an overpass, **DO NOT** touch steel girders. Move away from your bike. Remain on dry surfaces if possible. Overpasses are engineered structures, and are likely to be properly grounded. Although an overpass is likely to be higher than the surrounding landscape, if it is struck by lightning, the electrical current will likely be channeled safely into the ground. Look for a bridge.....Stay away from water.....Stay away from any metal surfaces.....Be alert for rapidly rising water if you are under a bridge. **HIGH TENSION WIRES**..... If high voltage electrical tension wires cross the road, you may want to see seek shelter directly underneath these wires.....the lightning will seek them out instead of you. Do not get too close to the large metal towers which hold up these wires. Stay at least 50 feet away. Electric companies design these high tension wires for lightning strikes.....If lightning should strike the wires or towers, the current is designed to safely go deep into the ground.

If you are caught in the open and lightning is occurring within 5 miles,, stop, move 50 feet away from your bike (you know....that big metal target) and try to find a ditch or low spot to sit in and wait out the storm. These recommendations are a last resort...You are **NOT** safe in these places....just marginally safer than in the open.

Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall. You are in danger from lightning if you can hear thunder

Many strong thunderstorms produce hail.

If you can't get inside, or if you feel your hair stand on end, which means lightning is about to strike, hurry to a low, open space immediately. Crouch down on the balls of your

feet, place your hands on your knees and lower your head. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize contact with the ground.

~~ If there are no reinforced buildings in sight, take shelter in a car. Keep car windows closed and avoid convertibles. Rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide no protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal.

And if you make it through the storm.....You'll have a *Great* story to tell !