



## THUNDERSTORM!!



### WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU GET CAUGHT ON THE RIVER?

The weather is warm, not a cloud in the sky, and suddenly things change. You're gliding down the Buffalo, high bluff on one side and dense forest on the other... and suddenly....

Thunderstorm events can cause rapid short term changes that need to be taken seriously. Awareness of the likelihood of a storm will help you make a decision about whether to go or not to go, or at least how far away from the river to set up camp and pull your boats. These storms are sudden and can happen far away from where their affects are eventually felt. For example, a major storm in the Upper Buffalo can cause serious problems in the Middle and Lower Districts without you ever hearing a clap of thunder or even seeing a cloud!

#### Safety Tips

- Lightening can strike up to 10 miles from actual storm. If you can hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike.
- If you are on a river when this happens, move immediately to shore.
- Find a low spot under short brush or a stand of small trees uniform in size.
- Stay at least 6 ft away from any tree trunk and 15 ft from other people.
- Avoid metal objects (metal gunwales on canoes or metal paddle shafts), isolated tall trees, shallow caves, and open fields (you don't want to be the tallest object).
- If you hair stands on end, or you hear a crackling noise or smell ozone, or objects develop a blue glow of St. Elmo's fire, this indicates a strike is imminent, and you should adopt the Lightning Safety Position: Squat low to the ground on balls of feet, heels touching, preferably on your PFD or some insulated pad, keeping your head down, hand over ears and eyes closed; do not touch the ground with your hands.
- If the hair on your arms start to stand up, hold breath so as not to inhale superheated air.
- Never lay flat on the ground.

Any emergencies or unsafe conditions should be reported to the park's 24 hr dispatch at 888/692-1162.