Lightning -- Don't Take Chances With It

Lightning kills about 200 people each year and according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration thousands more are injured. Property damage exceeds \$400 million. On the Delmarva peninsula last year at least five fatalities were associated with lightning. Three people were killed during a thunderstorm at Ocean City, MD., when lightning struck the metal beach umbrella under which they were sitting.

A lightning bolt typically carries 10 million to 100 million volts and can reach temperatures in excess of 50,000 degrees F. So when a hunderstorm threatens, seek shelter promptly in a house or other large building, or inside an allmetal vehicle, advises University of Delaware extension safety specialist Ron Jester.

"Remember that lightning is

attracted to the highest object in the area of electrical buildup," he says, "so don't stay where you'll be higher than the surrounding landscape." For the same reason, never take shelter under a treestanding tall in the sky, it serves as an excellent lightning rod. If shelter is not available, take refuge in a ditch, a ravine or similar depression in the ground.

Several other precautions can help protect you from lightning, the specialist says. Some of these measures may be very familiar, but, like everything else connected with safety, an occasional review never hurts.

• If you're riding a horse when a thunderstorm hits, dismount, drop to your knees and bend forward in a crouch, putting your hands'on your knees.

• If driving a car, stay inside it

— the tires provide insulation. The same is true when riding a tractor or combine, but get the tools and the header out of, or off of, the ground. They're excellent conductors of electricity. If you're working with farm equipment in an open field, after getting the tool bar, header, front end loader and the like off the ground, GET OUT OF THE FIELD!

• Stay clear of metal objects such as metal windows, wire fences or plumbing.

• If you are in tall timber, get to an area of low brush, away from the tallest trees.

Stay away from power transformers and lines, as well as TV and radio towers and antennas.
Stay away from and out of

water. DO NOT SWIM DURING A THUNDERSTORM!

· Get off of and away from

motorcycles, ATVs, golf carts and bicycles.

• Indoors, stay away from open doors, fireplaces, woodstoves and windows.

• Don't use the telphone. If you're talking when a thunder-storm hits, hang up.

"Your chances of avoiding being struck by lightning will be greater if you keep in mind that it's attracted to the higher objects in the area where it is active. Avoid these places," Jester stresses.

If someone near you is struck by

fines for failure to comply with the

law, state Agriculture Secretary

lightning, you may need to administer CPR (cardio pulmonary resuscitation). Then get prompt medical help for the victim. People who are stunned, but otherwise unhurt, should also see a doctor as soon as possible. The physical effects of lightning strike are not always obvious.

"Don't become another victim of an electrical storm," the safety specialist advises. "The next time a thunderstorm strikes, don't take a chance. Act promptly to protect yourself."

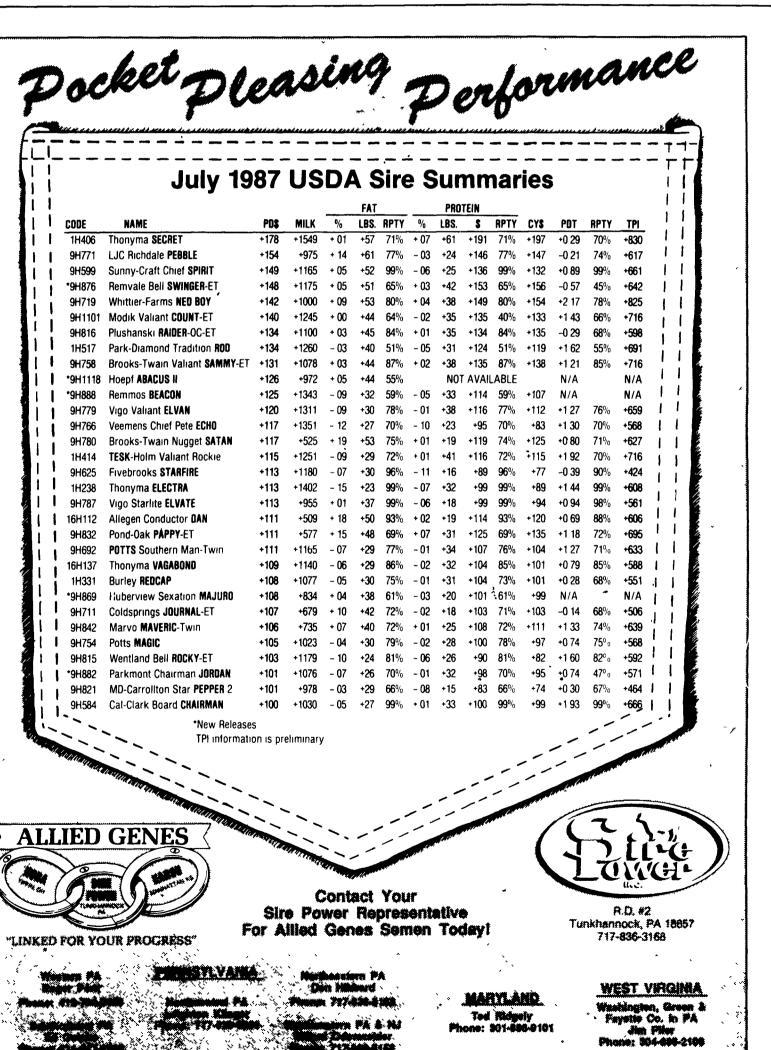
Pet Owners Risk Fines

HARRISBURG — Pet owners and kennel operators who do not have their dogs and cats vaccinated against rabies by Sept. 1 will risk

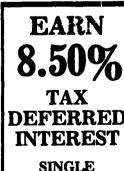
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Additional information about the law is available by calling the Agriculture Department's toll-free number, 1-800-AG-PENNA







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