

Safety after a disaster

Lightning

After a disaster, property damage may cause unusual and additional safety hazards. Many disaster-related injuries and deaths occur during cleanup. Here’s what to check:

Item	Action	Status
Structure	Ensure the building is structurally stable before entering. Examine exterior for cracks. Difficulty opening a door could be a sign that the building has shifted and the ceiling is bowing and prone to collapse.	
Gas	Ensure no gas lines are damaged near the lightning strike area. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve and leave the building immediately.	
Electrical systems	Using an outlet checker, check all outlets for malfunctions, such as open grounds, neutrals, etc. Open the circuit breaker box and check for any signs of arcing, burned wires or tripped circuits.	
Electronics	Be aware electronic devices may be broken due to a surge. A surge protector does not guarantee their safety after a direct lightning strike.	
Fire	If the lightning strike caused a fire, see the Building Fire section.	