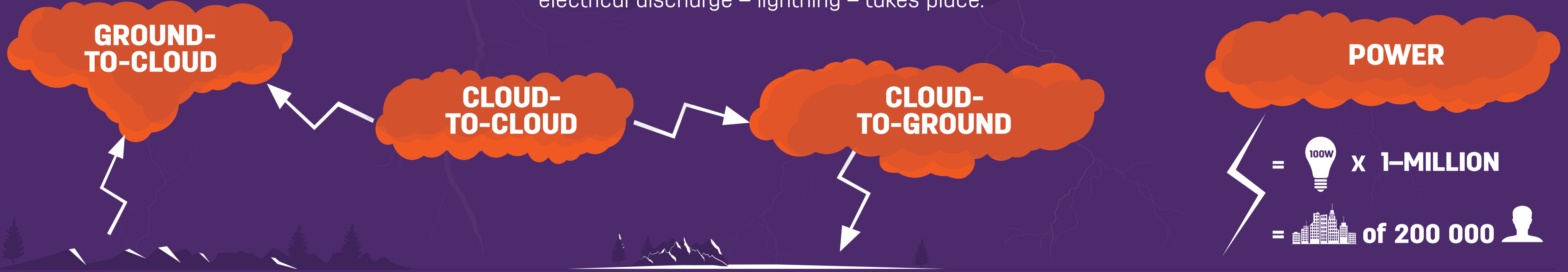




## THE PHYSICS

If the voltage difference between positively and negatively charged areas becomes too great, an electrical discharge – lightning – takes place.

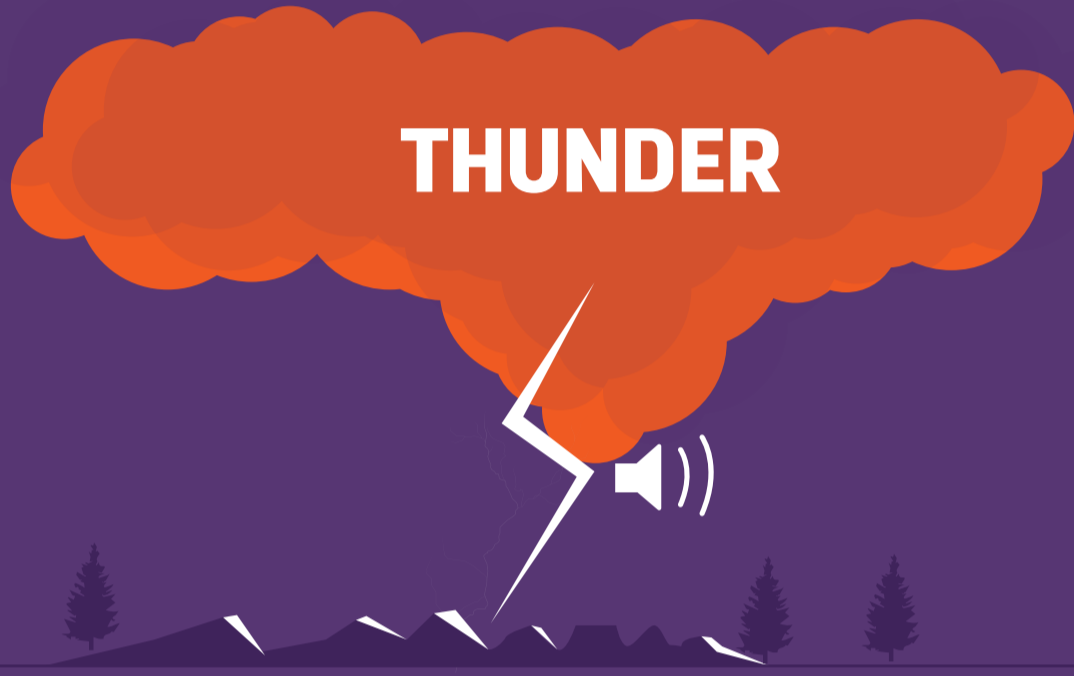


The majority of lightning strikes travel from the ground to the clouds, but one also gets cloud-to-ground and cloud-to-cloud flashes.

And while ground-to-cloud flashes often hit high, exposed objects such as trees, steeples, masts or mountain peaks, you're not safe just by avoiding them: cloud-to-ground flashes frequently hit flat ground and low buildings.

The power of the discharge is mind-boggling. A single lightning bolt can light a city of **200 000** people for a minute, with every metre of a bolt shining as brightly as **1-million 100W** light bulbs.

## THE 30/30 RULE



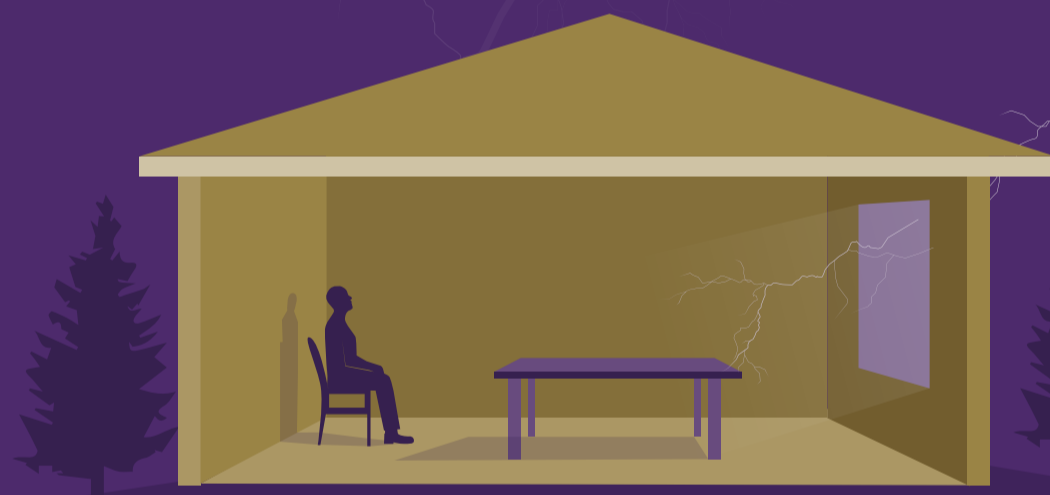
If you don't hear thunder within **30 seconds** of seeing a lightning flash, you're OK – for the moment. If you hear the thunder within **15 seconds**, the storm is only about **5km** away; if it's under five seconds, you're at high risk.

The rule is: if the time difference between lightning flash and thunder is under **30 seconds**, seek cover; once the storm has passed, wait **30 minutes** before going outside again.

## THE BEST PLACE TO BE DURING A THUNDERSTORM



Inside a building



Stay away from the windows



Do not use electronic equipment



Do not bathe



Stay in the car



If you're in the open, crouch, put your feet together, wrap your arms around your legs, keep your head down.



Put at least **3m** of space between you and other people, as well as anything you're carrying.

## WHAT WON'T PROTECT YOU



Rubber-soled shoes



Tyres



Non-lightning protected shelters



Trees



Mountaintops



Cave entrances



Tents

There's no telling where or when lightning might strike. Just as surge protection is a precaution against equipment damage or fire, the abovementioned tips are your protection against potentially serious injury or even death.