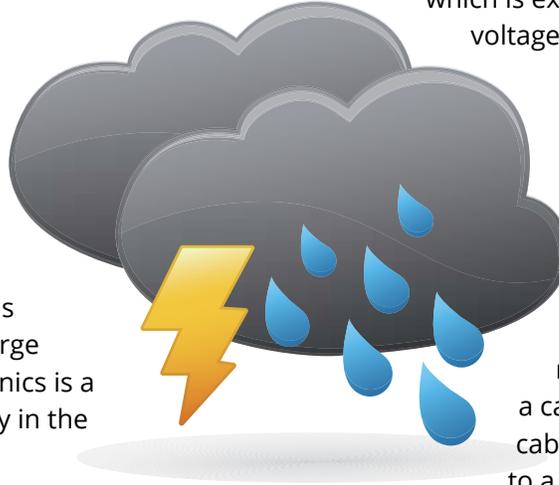


Lets Talk About Lightning, and how it applies to Lobo Internet customers and electronic equipment/computers/routers/radios.

We always suggest making sure all your electronics are plugged into a lightning protected power strip instead of directly into the wall outlet. Especially if you're in the East Mountain area and your house is prone to electrical problems. Surge and lightning damage to electronics is a frequent occurrence, particularly in the summer months.



Lightning typically damages electronics in one of two ways. The first is a direct lightning strike to the home, which is an infrequent occurrence. A direct lightning strike will cause significant damage to electrical and nonelectrical items in the home. In some instances, this will start a fire, often in the wiring within the walls or the attic. It can also cause structural damage to the roof, chimney, or sometimes the windows or foundation (Storm Highway). Moreover, electronics plugged into an electrical system that receives a direct lightning strike typically cannot be protected by a surge protector.

The more common scenario is for a nearby lightning strike to enter the home through wires or pipes that extend outside the home. The energy from a nearby lightning strike can travel through communication wires (such as phone, internet, or cable wires), directly from a utility pole into the home's electrical panel, or through conductive metal (such as plumbing or metal bars in the foundation) (NWS). Damage from this type of event is generally less severe than that of a direct strike.

If lightning travels into the home through the wiring or through communication cables (such as those used for internet, cable TV, or phone), it can cause serious damage to any electronics not properly con-

nected to a point-of-use surge protector. Consumer electronics, such as computers, televisions, and gaming systems, all utilize an integrated circuit, which is extremely susceptible to damage from a voltage overload caused by a surge.

Fortunately, if these types of electronics are properly connected to a quality surge protector, they can be safeguarded from voltage fluctuations. An important thing to keep in mind is that the energy from a lightning strike can travel through communication cables that are connected to a cable box, phone, or modem. If these cables are not also properly connected to a surge protector, the overvoltage can travel into the device that it is directly connected to and damage the circuit board.

Is it OK to be using electronics during lightning storms?

You can - but it depends on the intensity and location of the storm. I would play it safe and not recommend it. Go and read a book for an hour or two after disconnecting your devices.

Not all appliances are created equal. Some appliances such as toasters, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, and music systems have electronic components such as circuit boards with ICs. These circuit boards are extremely sensitive; even a spark of static electricity can irreparably damage them. A direct lightning strike would completely destroy them. Devices with electronic circuitry, e.g. computers, televisions, music systems and video game consoles, etc. should be unplugged as first priority.

New Mexico Monsoons & Lightning

New Mexico and other areas across the Southwest U.S. are affected by the North American Monsoon System (NAMS) every summer, and the "Monsoon Season" is designated as the period lasting from

June 15th through September 30th. With the onset of the Monsoon, New Mexico is typically impacted by a variety of weather hazards that can often put the population at risk for serious injury or death. Thunderstorm frequency increases during this period, while exceptionally hot days are common as well. We hope this will help promote awareness of the life-threatening weather hazards that affect New Mexico during the Summer Monsoon.

Despite the desert environment of the Land of Enchantment, statistics indicate that significant weather events associated with the Monsoon are responsible for property damage, injuries and fatalities across the state every single year. In 2010, monsoon related events were responsible for two fatalities in New Mexico.

As a result, we urge all residents and visitors to become familiar with the hazards associated with the Summer Monsoon. Please take the time to review safety rules that could save your life or help prevent serious injury. Community governments and businesses should review their emergency action preparedness plans and are urged to conduct drills to train staff and employees in flash flood procedures.

The best way to avoid lightning, flash floods, and other dangerous weather events during the monsoon season is by staying alert of the weather conditions and avoiding the threat before it occurs. Many opportunities are available to gain weather information including:

- Monitoring current weather forecasts on TV or the internet.
- Listening to weather reports on the radio or a NOAA weather radio.
- Subscribing to lightning and severe weather notification services.
- Scanning the skies 360 degrees around and overhead before leaving a safe location.

Understanding Watches, Warnings, and Advisories:

Watches (Severe Thunderstorm, Flash Flood, and

Tornado, for example) mean that widespread severe weather or flash flooding is possible. A watch means that severe weather or flash flooding has not yet occurred, but weather conditions are becoming highly volatile. Pay close attention to the weather, and tune into TV, radio, or NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts regularly.

Warnings (Severe Thunderstorm, Flash Flood, Tornado, Dust Storm, Excessive Heat) mean that life-threatening weather is about to occur, or has been reported. Take action immediately.

Areal Flood Advisories mean heavy rains will cause minor flooding of washes, streams, and typical flood-prone areas. Flooding in this situation is usually not serious. If the flooding does become life threatening, then the flood advisory is upgraded to a Flood Warning.

Warnings are not issued for lightning, mainly because thunderstorms, no matter how weak, can produce deadly cloud-to-ground lightning. Any time thunderstorms are in the area, lightning is a serious threat. This is supported by the fact lightning is the number one killer in New Mexico, with 84 deaths since 1959.

News media and New Mexico emergency managers or anyone needing information on Monsoon Season significant weather, or any other preparedness and planning, are invited to contact Northern and Central New Mexico (NWS Albuquerque NM) Kerry Jones - Warning Coordination Meteorologist (505) 244-9150 Ext. 223.

This information was obtained from the National weather Service website on the Albuquerque New Mexico Monsoon awareness home page. There is a lot of information there including Current Hazards, Current Conditions, Radar, Forecasts, Rivers and Lakes, Climate and Past Weather, Local Programs and much more from this URL, visit the url below you won't be disappointed:

<https://www.weather.gov/abq/prepawaremonsoonhome>

