

### **A survey of 221 locations struck by lightning**

Lightning is a natural disaster and it causes death and damage all over the globe. It continues to be a frequent killer. A study was conducted to identify (a) reasons for damage by lightning incidents and (b) possible precautions to reduce lightning hazards.

Information of locations and incidents of lightning strikes was collected. Two hundred twenty one (221) such locations were inspected to collect data. Analyses of the data lead to following results/ conclusions.

Average number of people killed in a fatal lightning incident is 1.22 and average number of people diseased in a hazardous lightning incident is 1.85. These figures are considerable and hence lightning can be considered as a natural disaster. In 72.2 % of lightning incidents, patients have not been given first aid. The public should be encouraged in giving first aid to those affected in lightning incidents.

Average cost of the damage in an incident is about Rs 50000.00 and this is a considerable figure. In 68.5% of the lightning cases, precautionary steps have not been taken. People should be made aware of precautionary steps for reduction of lightning hazards to life and property.

Majority of people, 55.8%, do not care to take precautionary steps to protect electrical instruments. 52.2%, people do not taken necessary steps to switch off the television

antenna in bad weather conditions. Closer the (object) struck by lightning, danger of getting affected by side flashes is considerable. Buildings within 20 meters are the most affected.

Only in 9.5% of the cases the resistance was less than 10 ohm. Most (31.4%) of the earth rod resistance in buildings in Sri Lanka seems to be in the range 50 -100 ohm.