

10 health, safety tips for this rainy season

THE social media is currently awash with incidences where people continue to put their lives in danger because they have attempted to work against the forces of nature.

This week, I have prepared 10 health and safety tips to take you through this rainy season. Water exudes an unconceivable force that could sweep or bring down the strongest building. It is imperative that we keep safe this rainy season by heeding to these health and safety tips. Enjoy your reading.

Tip One: Don't Touch Wires From Fallen Electricity Poles:

Children are naturally inquisitive. When electric poles fall they like to go to inspect. In the process they touch electric lines which may be live. This has claimed lives of many children and adults.

Children should be educated on the need to stay away from any electric wires from poles. They should stay away from water that accumulates around areas with electric poles. Fallen electric wires should be treated as live at all times.

People should not cut particularly wet tree branches that have fallen or come in contact with electric lines they may conduct electricity. It is prudent to call the relevant authority to come and attend to them.

It is not a good idea to tie your bicycle or motor cycle to an electricity pole as malfunctioning or falling wires could come in contact with your bike and electrocute you. People should report any fallen electricity wires or any suspiciously dangling wires to the national power utility.

Tip Two: Do Not Support Roofing Materials With Heavy Stones

It is a common practice in rural areas to support roofing materials with heavy stones. This is supposedly meant to support the roofing material from being blown away by heavy winds during a storm. While this seems a brilliant idea, it can be very fatal at times.

If strong winds force the roofing materials off, the heavy stones could fall inside the house. This can maim people or lead to loss of lives. It is advisable to ask a competent person to attend to your roof so that it is firm and will not be destroyed during storms.

Tip Three: Stay Away From Lightning Prone Areas

No place is absolutely safe from lightning during a storm. Stay indoors during a storm that has lightning and thunders. Remember even a seemingly safe storm can bring unexpected bolts of lightning and loud roars of thunder. If you have to be outdoor make sure you are besides high rise buildings.

They shield you from lightning through their lightning conductors. If it takes less than 30 seconds between the time you see a lightning flash and hear a thunder that means you are within a 16 kilometre lightning range. Lightning strikes within that range. This is a good reason why you should be indoors during a storm.

If you are caught in the middle of a storm never seek shelter under an isolated trees or where you are the tallest object as this is a prime target for lightning bolts. If you are in an open space stay low crouch down and keep your feet together.

There should be no pools of water near you as these can conduct electricity from lightning during a storm. Don't touch any metal objects. In the home desist from using a telephone with a line as this can conduct electricity. Switch of all electricity appliances including computers.

Tip Four: Take Serious Precautions Against Mosquitos.

Mosquitos breed more during the rainy season because they favour stagnant pools to lay their eggs and for the development of their larvae. Mosquitos transmit malaria and this disease can be fatal to adults and children if not urgently attended to.

Any body temperature rises during this season should be treated with caution. Sometimes hospitals and clinics give mosquito nets free of charge during the rainy season. Find out which hospital/clinic in your area is doing this.

If you cannot find a free one save some money to buy one as this can make a difference between life and death particularly for children. Complement the mosquito net with mosquito repellants, mosquito coils, insect's sprays and repellent herbs.

Close all windows and doors before dark and wear trousers and long sleeved clothes if you have to be out after dark. Other precautionary measures includes fitting windows with mosquito screens, clearing gutters and draining any water accumulating garden tools and children's toys.

Drain water from bird baths, unfiltered pools as this eliminates breeding grounds for mosquitos. For some reasons if there are excessive pools of water that you cannot deal with ask a professional health worker to apply a larvicide to reduce the mosquito population around your home.

Tip Five: Avoid Walking or Working In The Rain

It is very tempting to drive through or walk through a pool of water. Walking or working in pools of water or when it is raining puts you to the risk of a host of viral diseases. Most of them can cause a wide range of fungal infections.

For that reason people should avoid wet grounds. If you have to pass through pools of water for some circumstances beyond your control, make sure to bath with soap and dry yourself to kill all sorts of germs that can cause illness.

If you are a diabetic patient these conditions may put you at a serious risk. Other reasons for not getting yourself wet this season is the obvious reasons that you can get

a cold, get worms in your feet, suffer from an asthmatic attack, get pneumonia among many other forms of sickness. You can keep extra clothes at work so that when you get yourself soaked you can change into warm clothes.

Tip Six: Don't Use Electrical Gadgets During A Storm

Do not touch any electric wiring during a storm as this can potentially carry electricity from a bolt of lightning. Make sure you remove electrical gadgets before you hear the first rain drop otherwise after that it is too late and you could be exposing yourself to lightning. Stay away from sinks, tubs and toilet seats during a storm.

Plumbing material can conduct electricity from lightning strikes. Most houses are earthed from plumbing water pipes to the ground. This passage of electricity can also be used by electricity from lightning.

Avoid playing video games connected to the television during a storm. If you suspect that your home may be flooded during a storm pull down the main power switch. Afterwards when you have dried your home call a competent electrician to assess and ensure that it is safe to put up the main power switch again.

Tip Seven: Pay Attention To Weather Forecasts

Please follow weather forecasts during the rainy seasons as they inform your day to day decisions. These decisions may bring safety to you and your family.

The decision may range from switching of all electricity appliances before going to work, carrying an umbrella, collecting the kids from school before a heavy storm and telling your kid to stay at school if the local river is flooded.

Desist from any activity that can put your life in danger. Weather forecasts can inform people in flood prone areas to move to higher ground. Take heed to these. Do not try to handle any situation that is beyond you during a storm.

In case of any emergencies, call for help and do not put your life or life of others in danger. Always keep the contacts of the major emergency services like ambulances, police, fire brigade and the local civil protection unit.

Tip Eight: Insure Your Property Against Weather Hazards

If you can afford please insure your house, car, crops and any other valuable property from weather hazards like storms.

This can keep your stress levels very low. Losing a house, car or any form of property can be a very stressing experience that can slump you to a depression. Insuring your property can give you peace of mind and good health.

Giving insurance companies liability over your property can give u assurance. Remember to keep yourself safe because you are the most valuable thing your family can have. No amount of life cover can replace you.

Tip Nine: Never Drive Through Flooded Rivers

Motor vehicles are quite buoyant in water and are easily washed away even by water that is barely half a metre high. Cars or lorries spread their weight evenly on their wheels and that gives water a great surface area to dislodge them off the bridge. For this reason people should never cross any flooded river or a submerged bridge. Other safety tips for driving in wet weather include checking brakes, tyres and wipers before embarking on long journeys. Gazetted minimum and maximum speeds are for dry weather conditions.

Drivers should exercise extreme caution in wet condition. They should reduce speeds at all cost to avoid unnecessary accidents. Tarmac surfaces may be oily during the rainy season and this could make the road slippery. It is advisable to stop driving during a storm but if you have to drive for whatever reason don't tailgate – that is following closely to the car in front. If the car behind is tailgating you slow down and let it over take you.

Do not use your cruise control during a storm or wet weather as it does not give you full control of the vehicle. It impairs your ability to adjust speed quickly. If you skid because of hydroplaning do not apply hard brakes or make sudden turns.

During a storm turn your head lamps on (but don't flash others) so that your car is clearly visible. Do not multi task when driving and ensure that your fan and air

conditioner is working as it helps clear the mist off the windows. Do not follow heavy vehicle closely behind as they splash your screen reducing your visibility.

Tip 10: Don't Force Animal Drawn Cart Over A Flooded River

Donkeys and cattle are not as rational as human beings. The way they react to flooded conditions may put people at risk. If water washes away you in an animal drawn cart it is obvious that this experience is usually fatal. This is also cruel to the animals tied to the cart. The best way is never to contemplate crossing a flooded river with or without animals.

You may have ignored these health and safety tips and got away with it but that may not be the case every time. The next time could be fatal. Please take the safety tips seriously. This may save your life and the lives of others. Please be safe this rainy season. Enjoy your weekend!