

Lightning-Related Homeowners Insurance Claims Costs Surge

Florida, Georgia and California Are Top States
for Lightning Claims; Lightning Safety
Awareness Week is June 23-29

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NEW YORK, June 19, 2019—The number of lightning-caused U.S. homeowners insurance claims decreased in 2018—the third straight year it has done so—yet the average cost per claim has soared since 2016, according to the [Insurance Information Institute](#) (I.I.I.).

The I.I.I.'s findings, based on national insurance claims numbers, determined:

- [More than \\$900 million in lightning claims were paid out in 2018 to nearly 78,000 policyholders](#)
- The cumulative value of claims caused by lightning rose six percent between 2016-2018.

“With increased labor and construction costs as well as a consumer appetite for smart home

products, it’s not surprising that lightning-related homeowners insurance claims costs have risen,” said James Lynch, chief actuary and vice president of Research and Education at the I.I.I.

Lynch added the average cost per claim rose eight percent from 2017 to 2018. “However, the average cost per claim between 2016 and 2018 increased 21 percent,” he said.

Homeowners Insurance Claims and Payout for Lightning Losses, 2016-2018			
Year	Number of Claims	Average Cost Per Claim	Value of Claims (\$ millions)
2016	89,055	\$9,628	\$857.4
2017	85,020	\$10,781	\$916.6
2018	77,898	\$11,668	\$908.9
Percent change, 2017-2018 (2 years)	-8.4%	8.2%	-0.80%
Percent change, 2016-2018 (3 years)	-12.5%	21.2%	6.0%

Source: Insurance Information Institute.

State by State Numbers

Florida – the state with the most thunderstorms— remained the top state for lightning claims in 2018, with 7,108, followed by Georgia (5,539) and California (4,909), a new addition to the line-up. Texas, which had ranked second in 2016, fell to fourth place (4,559).

Top 10 States by Number of Lightning Claims, 2018

Rank	State	Number of claims	Average cost per claim	Value of claims (\$ millions)
1	FL	7,108	\$10,436	\$74.2
2	GA	5,539	\$9,430	52.2
3	CA	4,909	27,932	137.1
4	TX	4,559	14,819	67.6
5	LA	3,553	6,377	22.7
6	NC	3,119	11,561	36.1
7	AL	2,942	11,768	34.6
8	NY	2,938	10,873	31.9
9	PA	2,590	11,572	30.0
10	IL	2,475	10,290	25.5
Top 10		39,732	\$12,882	\$511.80
Other states		38,166	10,405	397.10
Total U.S.		77,898	\$11,668	\$908.90

Source: Insurance Information Institute.

Homeowners Insurance Coverage

Damage caused by lightning, such as a fire, is covered by standard homeowners insurance policies. Some policies provide coverage for power surges that are the direct result of a lightning strike, which can cause severe damage to appliances, electronics, computers and equipment, phone systems, electrical fixtures and the electrical foundation of a home.

In recognition of [Lightning Safety Awareness Week](#), June 23-29, the I.I.I. and the [Lightning Protection Institute](#) (LPI), a national organization that promotes lightning protection education, awareness and safety, encourage homeowners to install a [lightning protection system](#) in their homes.

“Unlike so many other natural, manmade and insurable catastrophic events, lightning damage is a more preventable occurrence,” said Bud VanSickle, LPI’s executive director. “Certified lightning protection systems are readily available to significantly mitigate loss due to lightning strikes. Insurance companies as well as policyholders benefit from certified lightning protection systems that reliably protect residential and commercial properties from catastrophic lightning events.”

To locate an LPI-certified lightning protection system installer in your area, [click here](#).

RELATED LINKS

Facts and Statistics: [Lightning Lightning Videos](#)

Consumer Alert: [The Dangers of Shoddy Lightning Protection System Installations](#)

Infographic: [Got Lightning? Get Grounded](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety](#)

[NOAA/National Weather Service](#)

The I.I.I. has a full library of educational videos on its [YouTube Channel](#). Information about I.I.I. mobile apps can be found [here](#).

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