

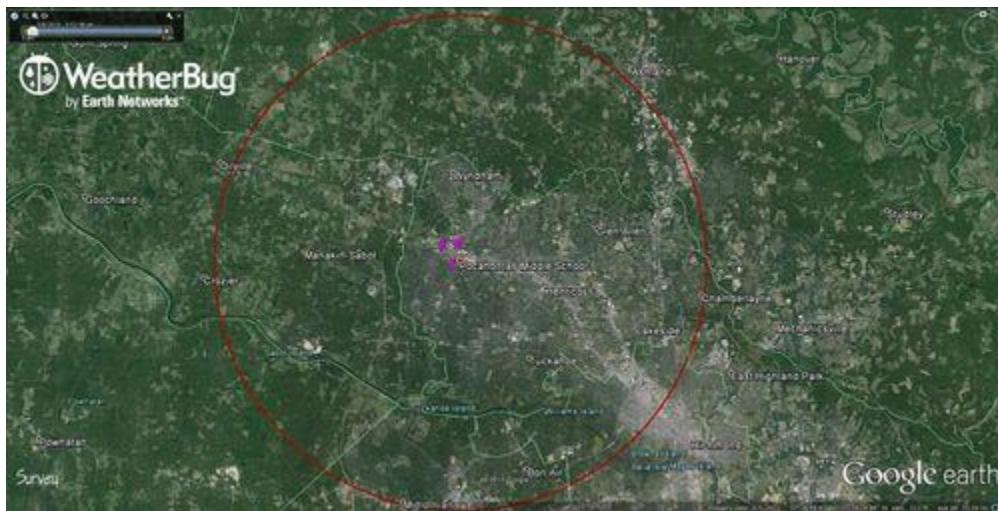
05/07/2015

# Analysis Of Lightning Strike At Pocahontas MS

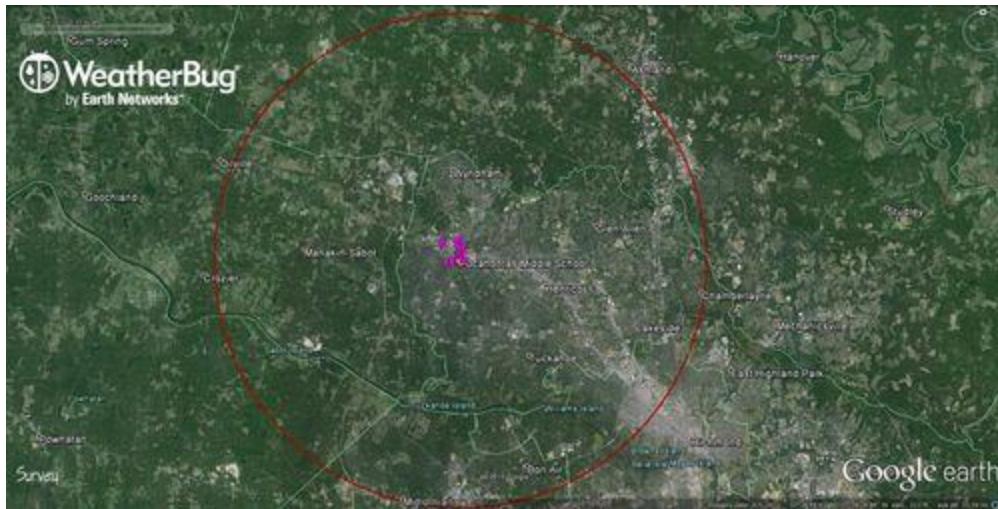
*Posted By Meteorologist Matt Holiner (5/7/15, 7:35pm)*

Our friends at WeatherBug (the company that provides the weather stations on our Elephant Insurance WeatherNet) provided us with some great images of the lightning we saw around the Richmond Metro Area Wednesday evening. This includes the storm that occurred over Pocahontas Middle School, where two people were struck by lightning.

The first image, below, is from 5:52pm Wednesday evening. This was when the first lightning was detected near the school. The first strikes were in-cloud lightning, not cloud to ground, but occurred just 575 yards from Pocahontas MS. This shows how unfortunately the storm formed nearly right over the school, giving the people there very little lead time. (Note: The red circle denotes a 10 mile radius around the school).



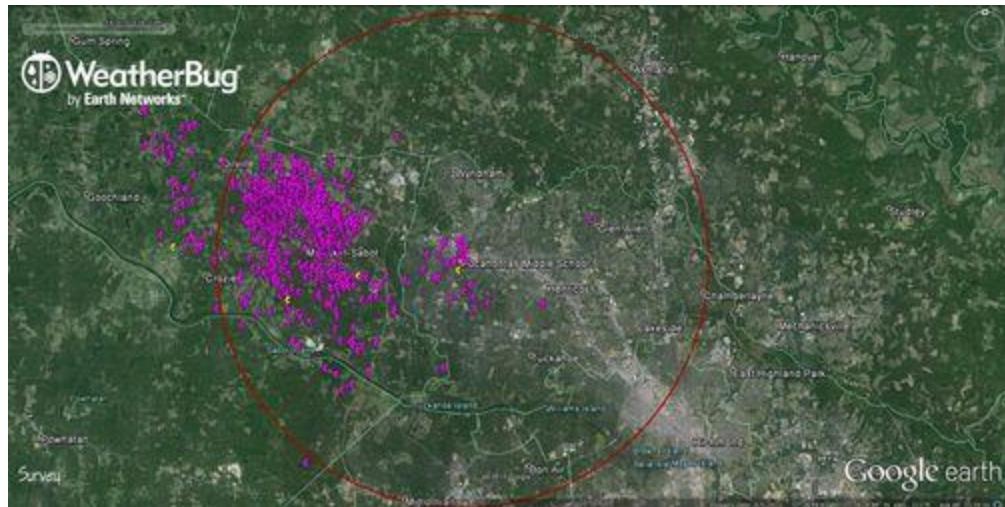
Just five minutes later, at 5:57pm, the cloud to ground bolt that caused the injuries occurred. You can see it on the map below as the yellow bolt on the map. The magenta colored bolts are in-cloud strikes.



Below is a close up of that same strike. The bolt came down on the edge of the parking lot as the two individuals who were injured were trying to take shelter in their vehicle. They were doing the **RIGHT** thing. They were just a minute too late.



The image below is a summary of all the lightning that occurred between 5:52pm and 8:04pm Wednesday evening. Notice how few cloud to ground bolts there were; only four during the entire time period. Though relatively rare, it only takes one bolt to cause injury or death.



We hope this will be last lightning related injury we hear about for a long time. To help keep you and your family safe, first check our forecasts on-air or online. If there's a chance for thunderstorms that day, monitor the weather closely. As soon as you hear the first rumble of thunder, get in your car or better yet head inside a building or home. If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to a storm to be struck by lightning. You should remain indoors until 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.

The NBC 12 Weather App has now become a great resource for lightning detection. When checking the radar/map portion of the app, be sure to turn on the lightning layer to see if any lightning is in the area. The latest feature is lightning alerts. When activated, the app will send you a notification the moment any lightning occurs within five miles of your location. Don't worry about receiving too many notifications. A timer will ensure that you receive no more than one notification every 10 minutes. You can turn lightning alerts on or off by downloading the latest update of our app and heading to the settings menu.