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# “Run For Your Life”

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by **MIKE BAILEY**  
The Falls Country Club

**H**OW many times in your life has ‘Good Ol’ Mother Nature’ given you a real scare?

I distinctly remember a few.

Take this past summer, while vacationing in Bermuda, Hurricane Emily rudely blew through. She was packed with winds in excess of 120 mph! The eye actually passed over our seaside cottage. My wife Jenny, realized I was scared when I began to frantically pace the floor, while the wind was ripping off the cement tile roof above our heads. The damage was incredible. The sheer wind force distorted our wall mounted air conditioner into a parallelogram. Roofs were destroyed. Trees uprooted. Downed power poles. No telephone. No electric. No water.

Yes, we’re having fun now.

Thankfully, the beaches were great. I found a filling station operating on a generator and we motored throughout the island on our little red moped. A vacation that we’ll remember forever.

We were very fortunate to be unharmed. The reality of a hurricane is often difficult to comprehend. The most impressive event during a hurricane is to experience the passing of the eye, the actual center of a hurricane. For a duration of twenty minutes, an eerie calm exists. The curious then venture out to access the damage, when all of a sudden, in a matter of only three minutes the back side of the hurricane comes blasting through, at a complete 180° opposite direction. That’s right, I was down at the beach, taking incredible pictures, when I ran for my life, dashing back to our cottage, until all was safe again.

More fearful than a hurricane, can be lightning, a phenomenon that can be totally unpredictable and occur without a moment’s notice. I have experienced two lightning strikes that I shall never forget and perhaps more frightening than a hurricane.

Once, while playing golf with my brother David, just as he was taking a practice swing, I witnessed a zigzag white bolt of light come piercing down from a cloud, at a distance of only 200 feet away. A sharp, crackling sound cut the air and a puff of grey smoke appeared just above a nearby tree. We knew that was a close one. I remember just as David was going into his backswing when the bolt of lightning struck, David let go of the golf club and it whirled into the air, much like a thrown club. In reality, holding such a metallic device, your instinct is to immediately release the club. After the club came to rest, all four members of our group looked at each other, and without even saying one word, we jumped into our carts and headed back to the clubhouse. I don’t think we even picked up our golf balls.

Being involved with the construction of the new Falls Country Club in Lake Worth, Florida from conception, I would like to share our input on the design and construction of quality rainshelters and restrooms. Being a private club, equity member owned from the very beginning, it has been the goal to construct high quality, safe and durable rainshelters and restrooms on the golf course, that will last for many years to come.

All too often, I tour courses with restrooms that appear too small, poor quality of materials and generally inadequate for the members’ needs.

The following criteria was implemented for what we believe will provide excellent service and durability for many years to come, yet at a realistic cost of construction.

Only to my amazement, within the next year, I too would experience such a feeling. One summer afternoon, I was taking soil probes on the practice putting green. A rain shower passed overhead, so I casually walked over to the clubhouse to stay dry. I was resting underneath the roof overhang, when all of a

sudden, a lightning bolt struck. It occurred so fast, I’m not exactly sure what happened. Within a split second, a white flash appeared. I was holding the soil probe in my right hand. I could feel a sharp tingle in my arm and hand. Without even thinking, I screamed and flung my arm upwards to throw the probe away. It scared me so, that my reflexes responded to get rid of the device as quick as possible. Soon afterwards, I settled down to realize the tingle in my hand was a result of the static electricity in the air.

1. *Location is important:* Structures should be located in remote corners of the project in order to provide protection where otherwise, you would be left out in the open.
2. *Never play more than two holes without available shelters:* Because of the physical layout of the project, 2 restrooms and 2 rainshelters were required, not to mention seeking available safety at the clubhouse maintenance building.
3. *Easy accessibility and visibility:* Structures are located between greens and the next tee along with paved cart paths therefore access and known locations are acknowledged.
4. *Large enough to accommodate nearby golfers;* all structures can house at least six (6) foursomes.
5. *Constructed of cement block and concrete:* Long lasting materials will provide far superior to wood.
6. *Cement stucco finish:* to provide excellent appearance along with ability to rinse down with garden hose for easy maintenance.
7. *Epoxy coated paint:* Far superior durability. Epoxy painted surface applied to walls (both interior and exterior), ceilings and floor.
8. *Metal doors and frames:* Most durable. Steel frames makes doors

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virtually indestructible for years of maintenance free service.

9. *Automatic spring loaded door hinges:* Provides doors to close automatically in order to keep insects outside providing a cleaner environment.
10. *Skylights in ceilings:* Provides adequate interior light, even on cloudy days, to reduce needs for interior electrical lighting.
11. *Spring loaded timer light switches:* If lights are desired, timer automatically shuts off within 15 minutes.
12. *Employee Restroom:* This sole factor alone can pay for itself within two years eliminating the inconvenience of employees tracking back to the maintenance building.  
  
Another benefit: Employees using their own restroom can virtually reduce the liability of causing a disturbance for the member's restroom.
13. *Urinal and toilet in Employee Restroom:* This can create a far superior cleaner environment.
14. *Concave floors with drains:* Interior drains allow for hosing down of

of interior for easy maintenance.

15. *Hose bib and hose rack:* Provides ability to water down and clean interiors.
16. *Men's restroom with both urinal and toilet:* Creates a cleaner environment, along with ability for usage of two members at one time.
17. *Ladies' restroom with two toilets:* This allows for two ladies to use restroom at one time, which can greatly speed up play.
18. *Counter top at sink:* This allows ladies to set purse next to sink for make-up etc.
19. *Cement tile roof:* Provides long lasting durability, less maintenance and a structurally sound roof for added protection.
20. *Exterior sidewalks:* around all four sides of building, allows golfers to seek protection on opposite side of strong blowing wind and rain.
21. *Concrete pillars:* Excellent structural strength. No wood here.
22. *Wall recessed for water cooler:* Wall mounted unit recessed away from

cart path.travel eliminates potential of cart ripping water cooler off the wall.

23. *Emergency Telephones:* A must! Communications can literally save a life.
24. And last but not least - *Lightning Rods!* Another must for all rainshelters and restrooms. There are no short cuts here. Proper length of lightning rods, routing cable and ground rods along with properly secured clamps can literally be the most important item of all.

Perhaps you might consider these options extravagant. Perhaps you might elect to modify a few of the options. I already have received criticism. The structures are too large. There is too much cement. They are too expensive.

I can guarantee this.

Someday, if you ever have your hair stand on end, goose bumps tingle from you head to your toes and the lightning bolt is so loud and bright, you literally scream for safety, you'll be glad to seek a safe rainshelter, because a good restroom or rainshelter has no price tag - if it saves your life. ■



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