



*behavior research center's*

# *Rocky Mountain Poll*

NEWS RELEASE  
RMP 2001-III-19

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ONE IN SEVEN STRUCK BY LIGHTNING;  
LIGHTNING MAY IMPROVE SPIRITUAL CONTACT  
OR SPIRITUALISTS MAY BE MORE PRONE TO LIGHTNING

Phoenix, Arizona. August 31, 2001. It may be true that the chances of getting hit by lightning are low, yet an astonishing 15 percent of residents in Maricopa county, or one in every seven persons, says that, at least once in their life, lightning struck close enough to them that they could feel the electricity.

Interestingly, men are more than twice as likely as are women to say they have had such experiences (a finding that may confirm suspicions that many men simply do not know enough to come in out of the rain). The study also indicates that the more income one earns, the more likely one is to report having experienced a lightning strike. Whether this, in turn, relates to reluctance to leave the golf course during turbulent weather was not addressed in this survey.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 593 adults in Maricopa county conducted between August 8<sup>TH</sup> and 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2001 by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona as part of the Center's independent and non-partisan Rocky Mountain Poll series. The public is welcome to visit [www.brcpolls.com](http://www.brcpolls.com) to read this and other recent poll results.

This survey also asked adults across the county whether they had ever had other kinds of experiences such as a visitation from an angel, or spiritual contact with a deceased relative or friends, or whether they have had an "out-of-body" experience.

Angel visits, it turns out, are a bit more frequent (18%) than near strikes from lightning (15%) while having had spiritual contact with a deceased friend or relative is a tad less frequent (13%). Adults claiming to have had an "out-of-body" experience registered only nine percent (possibly because some are still ... well ... out-of-body).

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Of interest is the finding that people who say they have survived a close lightning strike are twice as likely as those who have had no such experience, to also say they have had an out-of-body experience (perhaps shortly after the lightning struck?) or to have been visited by angels (who presumably misread the seriousness of the lightning strike). Spiritual contact with the dead also occurs more frequently among those who have experienced lightning strikes, than among those who have not had this form of synapse stimulation.

In closing, we feel compelled to note that at least one of the senior researchers at BRC reports a bolt of lightning shattered a tree close enough to where he and several friends were standing during a Mogollon Rim tempest that they all felt the electricity. None have as yet reported any visitations from angels.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2001-III-19), is based on 593 interviews with adults throughout Maricopa County between August 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, race and political party were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one can say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of +/-4.1 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

For this and other polls, see [www.brcpolls.com/results](http://www.brcpolls.com/results).

**BELOW: Statistical tables.**

**STATISTICAL DATA**

Behavior Research Center  
 Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona  
 RMP 2001-III-19

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*"Has lightning ever struck close enough to you that you could feel the electricity?"*

	<u>% YES</u>
Total	15%
Men	21
Women	9
Income: Under \$35,000	13
\$35,000 to \$54,999	15
\$55,000 +	19

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*"And have any of the following things happened to you?"*

|                                                              | ALL<br>ADULTS | STRUCK BY<br>LIGHTNING |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----|
|                                                              |               | YES                    | NO  |
| Experienced the presence of an angel                         | 18%           | 29%                    | 16% |
| Been in spiritual contact with a deceased friend or relative | 13            | 16                     | 12  |
| Had an out-of-body experience                                | 9             | 19                     | 7   |

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	PRESENCE OF AN ANGEL	SPIRITUAL CONTACT WITH DECEASED	OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCE
Total	18%	13%	9%
Men	14	10	10
Women	23	16	9
Under age 35	11	10	7
35 to 54	16	17	14
55 +	17	11	6
High school or less	15	8	5
Some college	24	14	12
College plus	17	16	11

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