**Three killed, nine injured in overnight downpour – Rwanda**   
  
<https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/28993/news/environment/three-killed-nine-injured-in-overnight-downpour>

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By Charles Nyandwi - Michel Nkurunziza

Lightning strikes killed three people and left nine others with injuries during the night of Sunday, August 17-18, according to the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA).

Heavy downpour overnight caused flash floods that damaged a bridge in Rutsiro District, the collapse of a house that injured two people, a fire outbreak, and two cases of strong winds that damaged five houses.

Water supply in [four sectors of Rubavu District has been interrupted following the heavy rainfall](https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/28988/news/infrastructure/heavy-rainfall-disrupts-water-supply-in-rubavu) that affected Gihira water treatment plant, according to the Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) Group.

Between August 11–18, lightning killed five people in 13 separate incidents. Three cattle and two other livestock also died, while four fire outbreaks were recorded.

Burera District reported two out of the five deaths recorded nationwide during this period. Ngororero, Gicumbi, and Rusizi districts each reported one fatality.

Two flooding incidents damaged two bridges, alongside three strong wind events and one house collapse.

The districts of Kamonyi, Nyamasheke, Rusizi and Musanze reported the biggest number of disaster incidents.

Impact of climate change

According to MINEMA, August has seen unusually heavy rainfall in the dry season in several parts of the country, triggering disasters that have caused deaths and damage to infrastructure and people's property.

The ministry explained that as the dry season ends and the rainy season begins, the risk of frequent lightning strikes increases, often with fatal consequences.

The rainy season is typically marked by heavy downpours and strong winds, which can trigger landslides, floods, lightning strikes, storms that blow off rooftops, and, in some areas, hail.

MINEMA urged the public to take preventive measures during this rainy season to save lives and reduce losses, as has been demonstrated in past experiences.

The ministry advises people to seek immediate shelter in nearby buildings and to leave water sources when there are lightning strikes. It is strongly recommended not to stand under trees, use mobile phones, or carry out outdoor activities such as fetching water or working in the rain during such weather conditions.

MINEMA cautions that electrical appliances should be unplugged, and people should avoid staying near telecommunication towers or metallic fences. Public facilities such as schools, markets, churches, and other gathering spaces are advised to install lightning conductors to minimise risks.

Report from citizen reporter Frank Shumbusho