**Lightning strikes kill three, injure six in August – Rwanda**

[**https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/28897/news/environment/lightning-strikes-kill-three-injure-six-in-august**](https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/28897/news/environment/lightning-strikes-kill-three-injure-six-in-august)

By Germain Nsanzimana - Charles Nyandwi

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At least 14 lightning strikes have been reported in eight districts since the beginning of August, according to the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA).

The incidents, recorded in Nyabihu, Kamonyi, Nyanza, Nyagatare, Musanze, Rutsiro, Gisagara, and Rusizi districts, left three people dead, six others injured.

Earlier in July, two lightning incidents were recorded nationwide, claiming two lives.

**ALSO READ:** [**Weather: Rain and thunderstorm alert on Monday night**](https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/28805/news/environment/weather-rain-and-thunderstorm-alert-on-monday-night)

Other calamities reported during the same period include a house and a hangar destroyed by fire, 6.4 hectares of forest burned in a wildfire, and a roof blown off by strong winds.

Heavy rain also damaged the bridge linking Nyamasheke and Rusizi districts on August 11, with the Rwanda Transport Development Agency (RTDA) notified for restoration.

**More about the lightning strikes:**

**Nyabihu**

On August 8, around 1pm, lightning struck a house in Jenda Sector, injuring Guillaume Nanyuzwenayo, 18, and Olive Nyiramigisha, 36. Both received treatment at Jenda and Kora health centres and have since returned home.

**ALSO READ:** [**A look at weather forecast for August**](https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/28513/news/environment/a-look-at-weather-forecast-for-august)

Nyabihu District Mayor Antoinette Mukandayisenga told The New Times that residents are being sensitised on safety measures during thunderstorms.

“People need to avoid neglecting the risks of rain, playing in water, or engaging in activities that may expose them to lightning strikes,” she said, noting that changing weather patterns demand greater awareness.

**Kamonyi**

Later that day, at 9:30pm in Rugalika Sector, lightning injured 48-year-old Rosalie Mukandoli and burned down a house belonging to Marie Jeanne Yabaragiye, valued at Rwf1.05 million. Mukandoli was treated at Kigese Health Centre and has recovered.

**ALSO READ:** [**Rwanda turns to local production of lightning rods to curb lightning crisis**](https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/25802/news/environment/rwanda-turns-to-local-production-of-lightning-rods-to-curb-lightning-crisis)

**Nyanza**

At around 10pm on the same day, lightning killed 19-year-old Claire Umutesi and injured 12-year-old Aline Uwineza and 42-year-old Esperance Mukamurigo in Busoro Sector. The injured received treatment at Busoro Health Centre, while MINEMA is providing psychosocial support to the bereaved family.

**Nyagatare**

Also at 10pm, in Rwempasha Sector, lightning killed four cows belonging to Benoit Kasagarira.

"Lightning struck many times, and it was too violent," Kasagarira said.

"The people I was with and I immediately said that the lightning was uncommon. Not long after, we found four of my cows dead on the spot. That's a significant loss, losing four cows in a single accident, considering how expensive cows are nowadays."

**Musanze**

On August 9 at 4:10pm, lightning killed 23-year-old Deborah Mukeshimana in Musanze Sector. Her family is receiving psychosocial support.

**Rutsiro**

On August 10 at 6:10pm, in Musasa Sector, lightning killed a cow owned by 63-year-old Andre Hategekimana.

**Gisagara**

On August 11 at 12:05am, lightning struck and injured 12-year-old Emmanuel Ndayishimiye while he was sleeping in Mugombwa Sector. He was treated at Gikore Health Centre and has returned home.

**Rusizi**

The same day, at 1:05am, lightning killed 32-year-old Jean Damascene Ndagijimana when he was sleeping in Nyakarenzo Sector. MINEMA is providing psychosocial support to the family.

The ministry said that, following the incidents, it recommended local officials to sensitise communities on lightning, fire and wildfire safety, as well as the importance of wind-resistant construction.

In April, the ministry said it is working on plans to locally produce lightning rods in a bid to increase their availability and affordability, as lightning continues to cause fatalities and injuries across the country.

Between January 1, 2022, and April 10, 2025, a total of 590 lightning-related incidents were recorded in Rwanda, resulting in 215 deaths and 630 injuries.

Report from citizen reporter Frank Shumbusho