



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®  
*The Lifeguarding Experts*

# BE ICE SMART



SAFE ICE  
THICKNESS  
DEPENDS ON  
LOAD / ACTIVITY



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## Stay Safe

- **Use designated ice surfaces** - where the ice thickness is regularly tested for safe recreational use.
- **Many factors affect ice quality and thickness** - air temperature, snow cover, water depth, size of water body, currents and distribution of weight on top of the ice.
- **Stay off river ice** - avoid moving water and stay off water bodies with changing water levels (i.e. storm water retention ponds).
- **Never go onto ice alone** - always go with a buddy.
- **Have an escape plan if you drive on ice** - open windows, unlock doors, unfasten your seat belt and turn on your lights.
- **Bring an ice safety kit** - floatation device, lighter, waterproof matches, pocketknife, compass, whistle, as well as ice picks, ice staff, and rope. A cellular phone could also help save your life.
- **Supervise children on or near ice** - children should always be under adult supervision.

## The Facts

- Clear blue ice is the strongest and safest.
- White opaque or 'snow ice' is half as strong as clear blue ice.
- Dull grey ice is rotting and unsafe.
- Ice is rarely uniform in thickness.
- Spring Ice is Rotten Ice. Stop using the ice once spring thaws begin.

### Recommended Minimum Ice Thickness for New Clear Hard Ice

**No ice is without some risk.**

Be sure to measure ice thickness in several locations.

Ice Thickness	Load/Activity
3" (7 cm) or less	<b>STAY OFF!</b>
4" (10 cm)	Ice Fishing, Walking, Cross Country Skiing
5-7" (13-18 cm)	One Snowmobile or ATV
8-12" (20-30 cm)	One Car, Group of People
12-15" (30-38 cm)	One Mid-Size Pickup Truck or Van

### Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories

Canada's Drowning Prevention Charity

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