

# ICE SAFETY TIPS

## There's More to Ice Than Meets the Eye

With cold Canadian temperatures, ice is around for a large part of the year.

- *If you plan on going onto ice, bring a buddy and have an emergency plan*
- *Measure ice thickness in several locations, wearing a lifejacket in case it breaks*
- *Ice can be weakened by freeze/thaw cycles, layers of water or snow in it, or fresh snow on top (which acts as an insulator, warming the ice below)*
- *Hidden factors, like outlet pipes or springs, can weaken ice*
- *Avoid ice over moving water and where water levels can change. Currents and water level changes can quickly cause changes to ice thickness and strength.*

**THICK ICE ≠ STRONG ICE!**

## Fast Facts

- Clear, blue or green ice is the minimum standard for strong ice. White ice has air or snow in it and shouldn't be considered strong.
- Warm temperatures can weaken ice over the course of days; very cold temperatures can weaken ice over the course of hours!
- Thin ice is rarely uniform in thickness, varying by several inches within only a few feet

## BE ICE SMART

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

3" (7cm) or less:  
**STAY OFF**

! No ice is without some risk – Be sure to measure ice thickness in several locations



4" (10cm):

ice fishing,  
walking, cross  
country skiing

5-7" (13-18cm):  
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



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# ICE SAFETY

## Water Smart Facts

### Surviving a Fall into Ice

- Break off loose ice
- Kick your legs and pull with your arms on the ice surface
- Use ice picks to pull yourself out
- Once out, stay on your stomach and crawl to land

### What to do if Someone Else Falls into Ice

- Call 9-1-1
- Anyone nearby on the ice should slowly lay down and crawl/roll to safety
- Tell the person to follow the steps above for surviving a fall into ice
- Have the person crawl or roll away from the broken ice. If able and safe - use a long reaching assist like a rope, stick, or ladder to assist them off the ice.
- Once you are both far enough away from the broken ice, help them into dry clothes and treat for hypothermia.



### Have an Ice Emergency Plan

Whether heading onto the ice for work or leisure, it's important to have an emergency plan and be prepared to use it.

- Bring a buddy
- Plan out your day on the ice and let a responsible person on land know where you are going and when you'll be back
- Make sure the ice has been tested and is safe to walk on
- Wear a lifejacket over your winter clothes in case of an unexpected fall-through, if possible