

HEALTH & SAFETY TIPS



Ice Fishing

Tips for safe ice fishing

- Fish with a buddy
- Avoid going out on the ice alone to ensure rescue is an option. Discuss rescue procedures in advance to ensure all fishers know how to perform a rescue safely.
- Check the ice thickness
- 25 cm is recommended as many ice fishers will drive a snowmobile or ATV to their fishing hut.
- Wear a floatation device and cold protection suit, even if you're fishing from shore or on thick ice.
- Carry rescue equipment
- This includes ice picks, a rope, a cell phone (in a waterproof container) and a first aid kit. Other safety equipment to be considered includes: flashlight, waterproof matches/lighter, tool kit, candles and survival blanket.
- Do not consume alcohol before or during your outing.
- Take a Red Cross first aid class to learn the signs and treatment for cold-related emergencies.

If you fall through the ice in to water, call for help:

By yourself:

- If you're able to get out of the water immediately, do it!
- Resist the immediate urge to climb back out where you fell in. The ice is weak in this area.
- Use the air trapped in your clothing to get into a floating position on your stomach.
- Once your breathing has calmed down, reach forward on to the broken ice without pushing down. Kick your legs to push your torso on to the ice.
- When you are back on the ice, crawl on your stomach or roll away from the open area with your arms and legs spread out as far as possible to evenly distribute your body weight.
- Don't stand up! Look for shore and make sure you are going in the right direction, usually the direction you came from.
- If you can't lift yourself out, lift your body out of the water as far as you can, and don't move. Your wet clothes will freeze to the ice, helping you to remain above water and allowing you to be rescued if you should lose consciousness.

With a buddy:

- Rescuing another person from ice can be dangerous. The safest way to perform a rescue is from the shore.
- Call for help. Consider whether you can quickly get help from trained professionals (police, fire fighters or ambulance) or bystanders.
- If you can reach the person with a pole or branch from shore, lie down and extend the pole to the person.
- If you go on to ice, wear a PFD and carry a long pole or branch to test the ice in front of you.
- When near the break, lie down to distribute your weight and slowly crawl toward the hole.
- Remaining low, extend or throw your emergency rescue device (pole, rope, line or branch) to the person.
- Tell the victim to kick while you pull them out.
- Move the person to a safe position on shore or where you are sure the ice is thick, and begin treating them for hypothermia.