

Winter is now here and the river is freezing up, with this in mind, as the freezing starts and the ice hardens and thickens the Hay River Fire Department members feel that it is important that we remind everybody to **STAY OFF THE ICE** until such time as it is thick enough to support you.

Ice Safety

Recommended minimum ice thicknesses are as follows

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

4" (10 cm) ice fishing, walking, cross country skiing

5" (12 cm) one vehicle snowmobile or ATV

8"-12" (20-30 cm) one vehicle car or small pick up

12"-15" (30-38 cm) one vehicle medium truck

Avoid!

Slushy ice

Ice on or near moving water i.e., rivers, currents

Ice that has thawed and refrozen

Layered or rotten ice caused by sudden temperature change

Other factors that weaken or "rot" ice

Snow on ice that acts as a blanket to prevent hardening of ice

Pressure ridges due to wind or current pressure

** What to do if you fall through the ice:

When You Are Alone On Ice

If you get into trouble on ice and you're by yourself:

- Call for help.
- 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.
- Reach forward onto the broken ice without pushing down. Kick your legs to push your torso on 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. Do not stand up! Look for shore and make sure you are going in the right direction.

When You Are With Others on Ice

- Rescuing another person from ice can be dangerous. The safest way to perform a rescue is from shore.
- Call for help. Consider whether you can quickly get help from trained professionals (police, fire fighters or ambulance) or bystanders.

- Check if you can reach the person using a long pole or branch from shore – if so, lie down and extend the pole to the person.
- If you go onto ice, wear a PFD and carry a long pole or branch to test the ice in front of you. Bring something to reach or throw to the person (e.g. pole, weighted rope, line or tree branch).
- 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.
- Have the person kick while you pull them out.
- Move the person to a safe position on shore or where you are sure the ice is thick. Signal for help.

** Taken from the Canadian Red Cross Web-site on Ice Safety.

