



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®  
*The Lifeguarding Experts*

## Check The Ice!

### Key Messages:

- Teach participants the danger of being in cold water due to the loss of muscle coordination (how fast it actually occurs)
- What to do if you fall through the ice.

### Instructor Notes

- Almost three quarters of ice related incidents occur on lakes (73%).
- It is important to understand how to determine the quality and thickness of the ice. The quality and thickness of ice can change quickly and the appearance can be misleading.
- Teach participants about the treatment for hypothermia

There are several steps you can take to stay ice smart:

1. Keep away from unfamiliar paths or unknown ice,
2. Avoid travelling on ice at night - clear hard ice is the only kind of ice recommended for travel,
3. If you must venture onto the ice, wear a thermal protection buoyant suit to increase your chances of survival if you fall through. If you do not have one, wear a lifejacket/PFD over an ordinary snowmobile suit or layered winter clothing,
4. Avoid slushy ice, thawed ice that has recently refrozen, layered or rotten ice caused by sudden temperature changes, and ice near moving water (i.e., rivers or currents),
5. Never go on the ice alone; a buddy may be able to rescue you or go for help if you get into difficulty,
6. Before you leave shore, inform someone of your destination and expected time of return, and, ideally,
7. Assemble a small personal safety kit no larger than the size of a man's wallet to carry with you. The kit should include a lighter, waterproof matches, magnesium fire starter, pocketknife, compass and whistle. You should also carry ice picks, an ice staff, a rope and a cellular phone



## Check The Ice! (continued)

### Learning Activities

#### *Dry Learning Activities: Crawl to Safety*

- To set up this station, you will need the following items:
  - You will need pool mats, flutter boards, etc.
- Set up an obstacle course where they participants will start in the bellies, then have them pull themselves onto the pool mat (or some sort of surface that simulates the ice). Then have them roll away for a specific distance to simulate they are a safe distance away from the hole I the water and distributing their weight more evenly across the ice to reduce the chance of falling into the cold water second time. Then have them stand up and run to a safety point.
  - Practice the HUDDLE position on land with participants so they understand how to preserve body heat if they are unable to get themselves out of the water
- Objective of this learning activity is to simulate how to properly remove yourself if you happen to fall through thin ice into cold water

#### *Wet Learning Activity: How long can you stand the Cold?*

- To set up this station, you will need the following items
  - You will need a cooler or bucket of ice and cold water, some small objects/prizes for the participants to collect, and a mat of some sort.
- Have a cooler that is full of ice and cold water. Have prizes or small objects that are located on the bottom of the cooler.
  - Get the participant to collect an object off the bottom of the cooler immediately.
  - Then ask the participants to keep their hand in for as long as they can. Right before they want to take their hand out, ask them if they can get the object they collected off the bottom again.