

WINTER HAZARDS

general winter & ice safety

Winter Safety at Buckeye Lake

Winter activity safety is the most important issue to keep in mind, especially around the ice. Due to lowered water levels, some winter activities, such as snowmobiling, ice boating and ice skating, should be done with special care.

Extreme caution must be exercised when using the ice at Buckeye Lake. You must pay special attention to hazards above and below the ice, such as tree stumps and other debris.

Ice Safety

There is no such thing as 100 percent safe ice! Many factors affect the strength of ice besides thickness.

- Do not venture onto the ice unless you test the thickness. Ice near the shore tends to be weaker due to expansion and warming.
- A minimum of 5 inches of ice is recommended for safe enjoyment of ice skating, ice fishing, ice boating and snowmobiling at state park lakes. However, even if the ice is several inches thick, ice-covered water is never completely safe.

Be Aware and Be Prepared

Never venture out on to the ice alone and let someone know when you will be on the ice and when you will return.

- Wear a life jacket or float coat.
- Avoid areas of thin ice or open water.
- Carry two screwdrivers, ice picks or large nails to help gain a firm grip, should you have to pull yourself out of the water.

Dealing with an Ice Emergency

Pay close attention when boating or walking on the ice. Cold water will cool a body 25 times faster than cold air of the same temperature.



Ohio Department of

NATURAL RESOURCES

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cont.

If you feel the ice begin to crack beneath you, follow these steps:

- Do not run!
- Lie on your stomach and spread your arms and legs (like an airplane)
- Stretch your arms over your head and bring them together.
- Roll away from the crack. Do not bend your knees or elbows.

If you fall through the ice:

- Try not to panic.
- Do not remove your winter clothing. Heavy clothes will not drag you down, rather they trap air which will provide warmth and flotation.
- Turn toward the direction you came, which is probably the strongest ice.
- Place your hands and arms on the unbroken surface.
- Kick your feet and dig in your ice picks to work your way back onto the solid ice.
- Lie flat on the ice and roll away from the hole. This will help distribute your weight.
- Get to a warm, dry, sheltered area. Seek medical assistance, if needed. If not, change into dry clothing and drink a warm, non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated beverage.

If someone has fallen through the ice:

Do not go onto the ice—if it has broken once, it will break again.

- Call for help.
- Tell the victim to hold their hands close to their face and breathe into their hands.
- Toss something that floats to the victim (plastic items like a cooler, bottles, etc.).
- Encourage them to use car keys, a pen or another object in their pocket to begin to pull themselves onto the ice.
- Extend whatever you can find—a stick, fishing pole, rope, coats tied together, jumper cables etc. to pull them to shore.
- When the victim is close enough to shore, you can pull them in by kneeling or lying face down on solid ground.
- Victims removed from ice water face significant physical challenges. Handle victims gently and minimize movement. Wrap the person in blankets to prevent further heat loss until medical assistance arrives, or transport to the nearest medical facility in a warm vehicle.