

# Dept. of Natural Resources: Keep safety top of mind as weather fluctuates

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**MADISON, Wis.** – With temperatures warming, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds the public to keep safety top of mind when heading outside.

The lake ice that supported vehicles, UTVs, snowmobiles and fishing shelters becomes more unreliable and dangerous as temperatures fluctuate between above and below freezing.

“Ice thickness can change very fast,” said Lt. Jacob Holsclaw, DNR off-highway vehicle administrator. “That could trigger a split-second and possibly fatal dunk for anglers, snowmobilers and other outdoor enthusiasts unless safety steps are followed.”

Here are a few basic [ice safety tips](#) to remember:

- Carry a cell phone and let people know where you are going and when you’ll return home.
- Wear proper clothing and equipment, including a life jacket or a float coat, to help you stay afloat and to help maintain body heat.
- Wear ice creepers attached to boots to prevent slipping on clear ice.
- Carry a spud bar to check the ice while walking to new areas.
- Carry a few spikes and a length of light rope in an easily accessible pocket to help pull yourself – or others – out of the ice.
- If you fall in, remain as calm as possible. While attempting to get out of the water, call for help. Anyone who attempts to rescue you should use a rope or

something similar to avoid falling through themselves.

- Do not travel in unfamiliar areas or at night.

## **Be Careful Near Open Water**

The DNR also encourages people to be careful near open water.

DNR conservation wardens and a Milwaukee police officer rescued a man who had fallen into the Menomonee River near Ember Street in the city of Milwaukee around midnight Feb. 28.

DNR marine warden Adam Strehlow and DNR conservation wardens Erik Anderson and Logan Allen were on night patrols when they responded to the call.

Wardens arrived and saw the man struggling to tread water near a seawall that rises approximately 6 feet from the water to the land above. The man was unable to hold onto a throw rope tossed near him.

The wardens and a city of Milwaukee police officer then climbed down the seawall onto a narrow ledge to grab the man and pull him up the seawall to safety.

He was transported in stable condition to the hospital for treatment. The man had been in the 35-degree water for at least 10 minutes. It is unclear how he ended up in the river. The river had no ice cover.

## **Late-Season Snowmobile Trail Conditions Are Unpredictable**

A few snowmobile trails in northern Wisconsin are still open. Check [Travel Wisconsin's Snow Report](#) to check trail conditions before heading out.

Just like the ice, late season trails can become unpredictable so be careful, watch your speed and ride sober.

Visit the DNR's [Ice Safety webpage](#) for more information on staying safe on the ice.