

# Ice Thickness

Safe ice is the number one consideration. A minimum of three to four inches of solid ice is the general rule for safety. Ice thickness, however, is not uniform on any body of water.

Be cautious in areas where “bubblers” are used to protect docks. They can produce thin, unsafe ice some distance away. Be especially alert in areas near shore over moving bodies of water and on lakes and ponds where streams enter or exit.

The American Pulpwood Association has a guide that lists the relative safety of various ice thicknesses. The guide is based on clear, blue, hard ice on non-running waters. Slush ice is about 50% weaker, and clear, blue ice over running water is about 20% weaker. Remember, this is just a guide: your own good judgment is essential!

Use the buddy system while ice fishing or other activities on ice—it saves lives.

## **ICE THICKNESS**

2 inches  
3 inches  
4 inches  
7.5 inches  
8 inches  
10 inches  
12 inches  
15 inches  
20 inches  
25 inches  
30 inches  
36 inches

## **PERMISSABLE LOAD**

One person on foot  
Group in single file  
1 snowmobile  
One car (two tons)  
Light truck (2.5 tons)  
Truck (3.5 tons)  
Truck (7-8 tons)  
Truck (10 tons)  
Truck (25 tons)  
Truck (45 tons)  
Truck (70 tons)  
Truck (110 tons)