

How safe is that ice or the snowmobile trail, really?

The OPP is warning the public to exercise extreme caution near any surfaces that may appear to be frozen. Although temperatures have been very cold, the significant snowfalls in the traditional snowbelt areas over the past week have created a situation in which it may appear that there is a thick layer of ice beneath you, when in some instances, this is not the case.

Outdoor enthusiasts are being asked to refrain from any ice related activities until they see ice hut operators putting their huts out. These operators not only know the local waters, but will regularly test the ice thickness before allowing their ice huts to be brought out onto the ice and used.

Although there have been no related ice rescues to speak of as of yet in the OPP Central Region, any need for rescues this early in the season has the potential to put the lives of many first responders at great risk. The advice of the OPP is very simple as at this time ?No Ice, is Safe Ice?.

The snow that has fallen has not allowed for proper snowmobile trail grooming as there is very little base. The light fluffy snow associated with the snow squalls of last week cannot be properly packed and many of the trails, especially those in wooded areas should be avoided until the trails are examined and prepared for use. A fallen tree or tree limb on a yet to be maintained trail could result in very serious injuries or death.

As conditions continue to improve and the snow continues to fall, outdoor enthusiasts will soon be able to fully enjoy their recreational winter pastime of choice. Until then, please avoid going onto any surface of water that appears to be frozen until you know for certain that it is safe and stay off the many official sanctioned snowmobile trails until they are officially declared ?Open for the Season?.