

Safety Sentinel

Feb 2010

Fond du Lac County Safety Committee Mission Statement

It is the Fond du Lac County Safety Committee's mission to provide safety awareness, education, and advocacy to all Fond du Lac County employees, while recognizing it is both the employer and employee's responsibility to maintain a safe work environment.

H1N1 Update - February 2010 Fond du Lac County Health Department

At the local, state, and national level, the number of H1N1 cases has declined dramatically since it peaked for the second time in October/November 2009, but almost all the



influenza that is occurring continues to be the H1N1 strain. ***Based on past pandemics, a third wave of illness could occur in the coming months.***

Vaccine administration remains the most effective way to protect against H1N1 influenza. A reminder for parents...children who have turned 6 months of age should now be vaccinated. We are offering H1N1 vaccine on a walk in basis in our office from 8:30 to 4:00 pm, Monday thru Friday, at all of our usual immunization clinics, and several public events through the month of February. Contact the Health Department at (920) 929-3085, or visit our website at www.fdlco.wi.gov for H1N1 clinic days and times.

It is not too late to be vaccinated!

Safety Tips – Snow Plows

Following are some safety tips for you and your family to keep in mind:

1. Stay at least 200 feet back from a snow-plowing or salt-spreading truck to avoid injury or other problems.
2. Plow trucks often have to back up. There may be blind spots in the mirrors. For your safety, do not pull directly behind a plow truck, as the driver may not be able to see you.
3. When cleaning driveways or parking lots, do not deposit snow on the street. This can cause safety problems for other motorists.
4. Plow trucks typically push snow to the passenger side of the truck (right side when looking at it from the rear). Never attempt to pass a plow truck on the right side since there can be significant amounts of snow on that side of the vehicle.
5. Dim your headlights when approaching a snow plow truck.
6. Do not pull out in front of a snow plow truck.

Source: <http://www.westlafayette.in.gov/egov/docs/1233856447950.htm>



- - - Cut on line and return inter-office mail marked "Safety Suggestion Box" or give to a Safety Committee Member - - -

Safety Suggestion

Date: _____

Please share any safety concern or suggestion:

Name (optional) _____

Ice Safety Tips

There is no such thing as 100 percent safe ice, but before venturing out on a frozen lake or pond, here are a few things to keep in mind courtesy of the Minnesota DNR website:

Check for known thin ice areas with a local resort or bait shop.

Test the thickness yourself using an ice chisel, ice auger or even a cordless 1/4 inch drill with a long bit.

Refrain from driving on ice whenever possible.

If you must drive a vehicle, be prepared to leave it in a hurry--keep windows down, unbuckle your seat belt and have a simple emergency plan of action you have discussed with your passengers.

Stay away from alcoholic beverages.

Even "just a couple of beers" are enough to cause a careless error in judgment that could cost you your life. And contrary to common belief, alcohol actually makes you colder rather than warming you up.

Don't "overdrive" your snowmobile's headlight.

At even 30 miles per hour, it can take a much longer distance to stop on ice than your headlight shines. Many fatal snowmobile through-the-ice accidents occur because the machine was traveling too fast for the operator to stop when the headlamp illuminated the hole in the ice.



Wear a life vest under your winter gear.

Or wear one of the new flotation snowmobile suits. And it's a good idea to carry a pair of ice picks that may be homemade or purchased from most well stocked sporting goods stores that cater to winter anglers. It's amazing how difficult it can be to pull yourself back onto the surface of unbroken but wet and slippery ice while wearing a snowmobile suit weighted down with 60 lbs of water. The ice picks really help pulling yourself back onto solid ice.

CAUTION: Do NOT wear a flotation device when traveling across the ice in an enclosed vehicle!

What if a companion falls through thin ice?

- Keep calm and think out a solution.
- Don't run up to the hole. You'll probably break through and then there will be two victims.
- Use some item on shore to throw or extend to the victim to pull them out of the water, such as jumper cables or skis, or push a boat ahead of you.
- If you can't rescue the victim immediately, call 911. It's amazing how many people carry cell phones.
- Get medical assistance for the victim. People who are subjected to cold water immersion but seem fine after being rescued can suffer a potentially fatal condition called "after drop" that may occur when cold blood that is pooled in the body's extremities starts to circulate again as the victim starts to re-warm.

What if YOU fall in?

Try not to panic. Instead, remain calm and turn toward the direction you came from. Place your hands and arms on the unbroken surface of the ice (here's where the ice picks come in handy). Work forward on the ice by kicking your feet. If the ice breaks, maintain your position and slide forward again. Once you are lying on the ice, don't stand. Instead, roll away from the hole. That spreads out your weight until you are on solid ice. This sounds much easier than it really is to do.

The best advice is don't put yourself into needless danger by venturing out too soon or too late in the season. No angler, no matter how much of a fishing enthusiast, would want to die for a crappie.

Source: *Minnesota DNR* - December 2007

Tips about Hypothermia

Hypothermia results from exposure to low temperatures, wind and moisture over a period of time. It can occur on the ski hill, in a car, falling in water that is cold or anywhere else where these factors exist that cause the body temperature to fall below normal. Parents need to be aware of the causes and symptoms of hypothermia in children as well as other adults and know what to do when you suspect hypothermia. For older children and teenagers, it is also important to educate them. When conditions exist to pose a risk of hypothermia, be observant and seek medical attention immediately if you suspect or observe any symptoms which can include:

- Complaints about being cold and irritability
- Uncontrollable shivering
- Impaired or slurred speech or vision
- Clumsy movements
- Blurred vision



Severe symptoms can include stiff muscles, dark and puffy skin, irregular heart and breathing rates and unconsciousness.

If you notice any of the above symptoms, you should get the person to a warm, dry place as soon as possible, remove any wet clothing and seek medical attention IMMEDIATELY. NEVER RUB THE SKIN. Bundling in a blanket will help keep heat in. An always soothing parent/child cuddle will help warm up the child and also bring comfort to both.

Source: <http://www.hubbardtwppd.org/Safety%20Tips/hypothermia.htm>

Radon

Radon is an odorless, radioactive gas that seeps into your home from underground. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Test kits are available from the County Health Department. For more information on radon, see www.lowradon.org or contact the County Health Department, 929-3085.



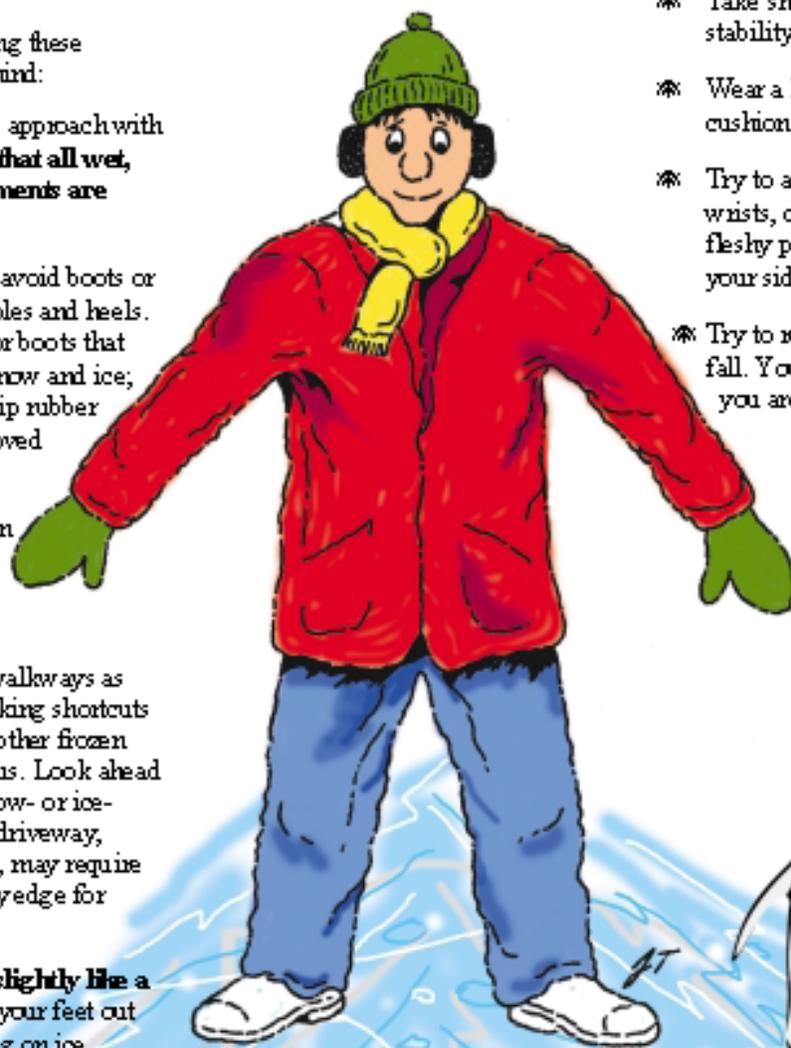
Walking to and from parking lots or between buildings at work during the winter requires special attention to avoid slipping and falling. Slips and falls are some of the most frequent types of injuries that IWIF sees – especially during the winter months.

No matter how well the snow and ice is removed from parking lots or sidewalks, your employees will still encounter some slippery surfaces when walking outdoors in the winter. It is important for everyone to be constantly aware of these dangers and to learn to walk safely on ice and slippery surfaces.

IWIF recommends keeping these important safety tips in mind:

- ☛ In cold temperatures, approach with caution and **assume that all wet, dark areas on pavements are slippery and icy.**
- ☛ During bad weather, avoid boots or shoes with smooth soles and heels. Instead, wear shoes or boots that provide traction on snow and ice; boots made of non-slip rubber or neoprene with grooved soles are best.
- ☛ Use special care when entering and exiting vehicles; use the vehicle for support.
- ☛ Walk in designated walkways as much as possible. Taking shortcuts over snow piles and other frozen areas can be hazardous. Look ahead when you walk; a snow- or ice-covered sidewalk or driveway, especially if on a hill, may require travel along its grassy edge for traction.
- ☛ **Point your feet out slightly like a penguin!** Spreading your feet out slightly while walking on ice increases your center of gravity.

Walking Safely Like a Penguin in a Winter Workplace Wonderland



- ☛ Bend slightly and walk flat-footed with your center of gravity directly over the feet as much as possible.
- ☛ Extend your arms out to your sides to maintain balance.
- ☛ **Keep your hands out of your pockets.** Hands in your pockets while walking decreases your center of gravity and balance. You can help break your fall with your hands free if you do start to slip.
- ☛ Watch where you are stepping and ... **GO SL-O-W-L-Y !!**
- ☛ Take short steps or shuffle for stability.
- ☛ Wear a heavy, bulky coat that will cushion you if you should fall.
- ☛ Try to avoid landing on your knees, wrists, or spine. Try to fall on a fleshy part of your body, such as your side.
- ☛ Try to relax your muscles if you fall. You'll injure yourself less if you are relaxed.