

Safety Sentinel

Jan 2011

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.

Tips on Driving in Poor Weather

On a regular basis have a mechanic check your vehicle's brakes, battery, cooling system, engine components, lights, tires, and windshield wipers and washer.

Once you're satisfied your vehicle is in good condition, here are a few tips to remember when driving in poor weather:

- Allow extra time to get to your destination.
- Warm up the motor and turn on the heater and defroster.
- Clear snow and ice from your windows, lights, and roof.
- Start off slowly when on ice or snow.
- Always maintain a speed safe for conditions.
- Allow plenty of space between your vehicle and the one in front of you.
- Activate your flashers when visibility is poor.
- Put your headlights on low beam in rain or snow.
- If the road is slippery, begin braking earlier than normal.
- Keep the inside windows clear and dry to improve visibility.
- Remember overpasses may freeze sooner than surface roads.

Always keep your eyes on the road to identify hazards as soon as possible. Driving in inclement weather requires extra skill and attention.

Source: Wausau Insurance Companies

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 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?

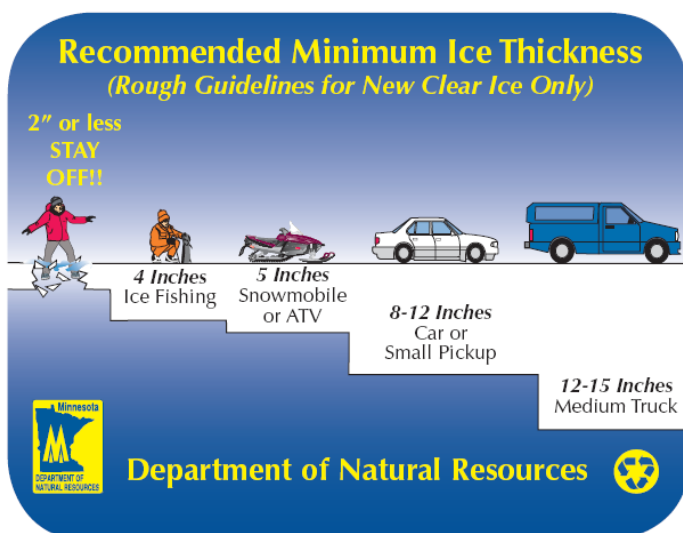
- Keep calm and think out a solution.
- Don't run up to the hole. You'll probably break through and then there will be two victims.
- Use some item on shore to throw or extend to the victim to pull them out of the water, such as jumper cables or skis, or push a boat ahead of you.
- If you can't rescue 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.

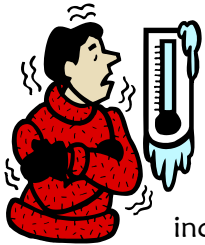
The best advice is don't put yourself into needless danger by venturing out too soon or too late in the season. No angler, no matter how much of a fishing enthusiast, would want to die for a crappie.

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.hubbar dtwppd.org/Safety%20Tips/hypothermia.htm>

January is Radon Action Month

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 (\$8-short term test kit; \$20-long term test kit).

For more information on radon, see www.lowradon.org or contact the County Health Department, 929-3085.

Fireplace Safety

More than 6,000 people end up in emergency rooms for injuries associated with fireplaces and fireplace equipment ... and most of the injuries occurred with children under five years old.

Approximately 14,000 house fires each year are started by fireplaces. Most of these fires escalated beyond the fireplace because of an overloaded fire or damage to the fireplace, such as missing bricks, obstructed flues, ignition of nearby combustibles, and flying sparks.

Keep your family safe and warm by following these tips:

- Inspect the fireplace.
- Have chimneys inspected annually. This reduces the risk of fires and carbon monoxide poisonings due to creosote buildup or obstructions in the chimneys. To locate a certified sweep, go to www.csia.org or call 1-800-536-0118. A certified sweep can also perform maintenance on wood stoves or help remove gas logs from a fireplace.
- Keep the top of chimneys clear of tree limbs or debris.
- Always open the damper before lighting the fire and keep it open until the ashes are cool. This will avert the buildup of poisonous gases, such as carbon monoxide.
- Never use gasoline, charcoal lighter or other fuel to light or relight a fire because the vapors can explode.
- Do not treat artificial logs like real logs.
- Always use a screen around the fireplace to keep sparks from flying out and to prevent accidental clothing ignition.
- At holiday time, make sure the Christmas tree is not close enough to be ignited by a spark.
- Always make sure that the fire is completely extinguished before going to bed for the night or when leaving the house.

Source: www.about.com "Fireplace Safety - Facts to Help You Operate Your Fireplace"



One- and Two-Family Dwellings in Wisconsin Need Smoke Alarms & Carbon Monoxide Alarms

As of February 1, 2011, there are Wisconsin requirements for both smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms in almost all one- and two-family dwellings, regardless of the building's age. The new carbon monoxide safety net is for dwellings with fuel burning appliances, fireplaces or attached garages.

Owners and Renters Have Responsibilities

Owners are responsible for alarm installations and occupants have responsibility to maintain the alarms. Owners must repair or replace alarms within five days of written notice from an occupant or an inspector. Authorized inspectors may enter dwellings to inspect alarms when requested by owners or occupants. Tampering with alarms is illegal, dangerous, and can cause serious liability concerns.

Where and What Kinds?

Alarms must be installed in the basement, and on each floor level. The alarms need not be installed in attics, garages, or storage areas. The alarms may be separate or combination units, powered by batteries, or in the case of new construction, tied into the home's electrical system, interconnected with battery backup. Installation must follow manufacturers' instructions. The manufacturer should be identified on the alarm. Alarms used in Wisconsin must be approved by Underwriters Laboratories.

Save Lives and Property!

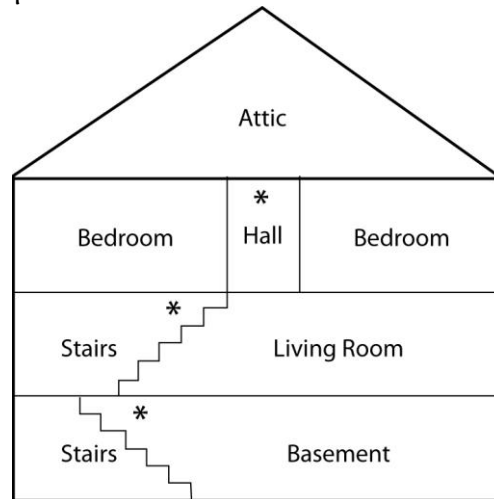
Smoke kills more people in residential fires than the flames. Smoke alarms detect the presence of smoke even before you can see it or smell it, especially when flames might not be in your line of sight. (There are alarms for people with visual or auditory disabilities.)

Carbon monoxide is a gas created by incomplete burning of fuels. Carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless and tasteless, but highly toxic. It can build up over time, with unrecognized symptoms, such as headaches, nausea, disorientation, or irritability eventually building to unconsciousness and fatal

poisoning. Carbon monoxide alarms warn of the gas before it reaches dangerous levels. Examples of some carbon monoxide sources are garages, heaters, fireplaces, furnaces, appliances or cooking sources using coal, wood, oil, kerosene, or other fuels. Electric appliances are not carbon monoxide sources.

Alarms Do Not Guarantee Safety

Alarms must be tested regularly and should have batteries changed at least annually, or when a low-battery warning sounds. The alarms must not be painted over and should be kept clean. Alarms should be replaced when they reach the end of their life span.



Install a smoke alarm and a carbon monoxide alarm (or combination alarms) in the basement and on each floor except the attic or storage area. See table below for additional requirements.

Multifamily Buildings

Buildings with more than two residential units also need smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. The installation requirements for those multifamily dwellings are different. Rules for alarms in multifamily dwellings and other public buildings are in the Wisconsin Commercial Building Code, Comm 61-66.

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/rsb/code/comm/comm060.html>

Source:

<http://commerce.wi.gov/SB/SB-UdcAlarmsInfo.html>

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Requirements	Battery-powered only	Building electrical system powered	Building power and battery backup	Interconnection between alarms	Alarms on every floor level	Alarms outside each sleeping area	Alarms in each bedroom
Smoke alarms in one- and 2-family dwellings before 4-1-92	✓				✓		
Smoke alarms in Uniform Dwelling Code after 4-1-92		✓		✓	✓		
Smoke alarms in Uniform Dwelling Code after 12-1-95		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Smoke alarms in Uniform Dwelling Code after 4-1-01			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Carbon monoxide alarms before 2-1-11	✓				✓		
Carbon monoxide alarms after 2-1-11		✓	✓	✓	✓		