

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alberta Blue Cross® cautions Albertans to stay off thin ice

As a supporter of Alberta’s preventable injury awareness campaign, Alberta Blue Cross is reminding Albertans to stay off thin ice—given the unseasonably warm winter we have had so far.

“Through the holiday season, frozen bodies of water offer great opportunities for outdoor winter recreation such as ice fishing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, skating and cross-country skiing,” says Brian Geislinger, Senior Vice-President of Corporate Relations and Community Engagement with Alberta Blue Cross. “But no ice surface is without risks.”

Even though we’re well into December, for many locations across the province, ice is not thick enough yet to bear the weight of quads, snowmobiles or side-by-sides—and in some cases may not even be thick enough to bear the weight of an individual on foot.

The recommended minimum depth for activities on new, clear, hard ice is as follows:

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| • 7 cm (3 inches) or less | STAY OFF |
| • 10 cm (4 inches) | ice fishing, walking, cross country skiing |
| • 12 cm (5 inches) | one snowmobile or ATV |
| • 20 to 30 cm (8-12 inches) | one car or small pickup |
| • 30 to 38 cm (12-15 inches) | one medium truck (pickup or van) |

“Ice thickness can be affected by many factors including currents, fluctuations in water levels, changing air temperature and even shock waves from vehicles travelling across the ice,” Geislinger cautions.

Albertans should also stay off stormwater drainage ponds, which are an attractive amenity in many newer neighbourhoods but which may have water flowing underneath that can dangerously reduce ice thickness levels.

And parents need to be especially vigilant to ensure their children don’t venture out onto thin ice, including dugouts on farms.

“We also want to ensure that newcomers to Alberta who may be navigating their first winter in Canada are also aware of the risks of thin ice,” says Geislinger.

For more information on winter ice safety, visit the Canadian Lifesaving Society at <https://www.lifesavingsociety.com/water-safety/cold-water-and-ice.aspx>.

As the province’s largest health benefit provider, Alberta Blue Cross is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of Albertans.

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For more information, please contact Sheena Moore, communications officer, Corporate Communications, Alberta Blue Cross, at shmoore@ab.bluecross.ca.

ab.bluecross.ca