



ELMHURST FIRE DEPARTMENT

Press Release—January 14, 2013

SAFETY ON ICE

The Elmhurst Fire Department wants to remind you that there is no such thing as 100 percent safe ice.



Recognize that determining the safety of ice is dependent on a combination of factors, not one factor alone.

Know ice colorings meanings.

Light gray to dark black - Melting ice, occurs even if air temperature is below 32°F (0°C). Not safe, its weak density can't hold a load, stay off.

White to Opaque - Water-saturated snow freezes on top of ice forming another thin ice layer. Most times it's weak due to being porous from air pockets.

Blue to Clear - High density, very strong, safest ice to be on if thick enough, stay off if less than 4 inches (10 cm) thick.

Mottled and slushy or "rotten" ice - not so much its color but its texture. This ice is thawing and slushy. It is deceptive - it may seem thick at the top but it is rotting away at the center and base. Most prevalent in spring, may be showing signs of browns from plant tannins, dirt and other natural materials that are resurfacing from thawing. *Not suitable for even a footstep.*

Observe the ice. Location of the ice: is it on a pond, a lake, a stream or is there evident flowing water underneath it? Is there a flow into or out of the water body? This will give cause for concern.

Understand that ice strength is not the same everywhere, not even on the same body of water.

Never walk, skate, play on, ski over or snowmobile over ice at night. You will not be able to see anything if something does go wrong and rescue help is much less likely to be around.

Any questions, please contact the Elmhurst Fire Department 630.530.3090.