

## **Safety alert: Avoid thin ice in Hennepin County**

Written by

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Hennepin Sheriff Rich Stanek is reminding parents and guardians to keep children away from thin ice on rivers, ponds, creeks, and lakes. Now that children are enjoying winter break, they have more time to explore the outdoors. Please instruct your children to stay off of partially-frozen bodies of water.

“Over the years, too many children have been severely injured or killed falling through thin ice in Hennepin County,” said Stanek, “Please take precautions and teach your kids that no ice should ever be considered safe.”

When your child is near the ice, you should be near your child. The early part of winter has traditionally been the time of year when children are at-risk for ice accidents because of their holiday schedule.

This warning applies to young adults who are college-age. College students may return home for the holiday break and expect area lakes to be frozen. The Sheriff’s Office warns that on bodies of water throughout Hennepin County, the ice thickness varies considerably due to recent warm temperatures.

A dusting of snow or frost may give thin ice the appearance that it is safe when it is not. When ice is less than two inches thick, no one should attempt to walk on it.

Remember to keep your dog on a leash this time of year. The Sheriff’s Office Water Patrol responds to incidents involving pet owners who put themselves in jeopardy chasing a dog that wandered onto thin ice.

For more information about ice safety, the DNR has tips online at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/ice>.