FREE PRINTABLE RESOURCE

ICE SAFETY FIELD CARD

No ice is ever 100 percent safe. These are minimums, not promises. Local agency guidance comes first.

MINIMUM THICKNESS (NEW, CLEAR ICE)

- ☐ **Under 4 in: stay off**
- ☐ **4 in: on foot**
  5 to 7 in: snowmobile or small ATV
- ☐ **9 to 10 in: small car or SUV**
  11 to 12 in: medium SUV or small truck
- ☐ **White or cloudy ice: double it**
  Honeycomb ice: stay off at any thickness

BEFORE YOU STEP OUT

- ☐ **Someone knows where you are and when you'll be back**
- ☐ **Life jacket on, ice picks around your neck**
  Foam, not inflatable
- ☐ **Measure near shore, then keep checking**
  Chisel or drill plus a tape measure

STAY AWAY FROM

- ☐ **Inlets, outlets, bridges, culverts and current**
- ☐ **Docks, logs, rocks, de-icers, open water at the edge**
- ☐ **Pressure ridges and slush on top**
  Follow a ridge until there's a safe place to cross

GEAR CHECK

- ☐ **Foam life jacket or flotation suit**
- ☐ **Ice picks**
- ☐ **Whistle**
- ☐ **Ice chisel or drill, tape measure**
- ☐ **Ice cleats**
- ☐ **Phone in a waterproof case, rope**
  Alone? Consider a personal locator beacon

IF YOU FALL THROUGH

- ☐ **Calm your breathing first**
  About 10 minutes of useful movement after that
- ☐ **Keep winter clothes on**
- ☐ **Turn toward where you came from**
- ☐ **Picks in, kick, slide forward onto the ice**
- ☐ **Roll away. Get warm and dry. Call 911 if confused or shivering hard**

IF SOMEONE ELSE DOES

- ☐ **Call 911. Don't run to the hole**
- ☐ **Preach, reach, throw, row**
  Go only when every other option is ruled out

Want the reasoning and the sources behind each line? Read the full guide on the TacticalBox blog.
tacticalbox.com/blogs/tacticalbox-blog

Sources: Minnesota DNR ice safety pages (thickness guidelines, formations and conditions, safety gear, checking thickness, traveling on ice, self-rescue, helping others); Michigan DNR ice safety; National Weather Service cold water safety. Call 911 in an emergency.