



water safety  
Scotland

# Press release

**12/12/2022**

## **Press Enquiries**

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## **Water Safety Scotland issues ice safety advice**

As temperatures in Scotland head in a downward trajectory, Water Safety Scotland (WSS) is issuing a warning about the dangers that frozen-over water bodies present. WSS aims to prevent needless deaths and accidents, and also to alert the public that the majority of the ice-related incidents involve children or dog walkers.

Jen Foley from Water Safety Scotland, said: “We encourage people to get out and about to enjoy frosty walks in the crisp cold air, but ice-related drownings are entirely and easily preventable. Frozen water can look tempting, but there is just no way of knowing whether it will hold your weight or how deep the water is beneath. We are urging people to keep themselves and their children off of frozen water, as well as keeping their dogs on leads. If dog-walkers don't wish to keep their dogs on leads, then we advise keeping ball- or stick-throwing to areas away from frozen water. Tragically, many past incidents have involved attempted rescues of another person or dog in trouble on or in frozen water.”

If you do encounter someone who has fallen through ice:

- Call the emergency services by dialling 999
- The emergency services will need to know where you are. Accurate information can save precious minutes. If you have a smart phone and have location services or map tool enabled, this can help. If not look around for any landmarks or signs – for example bridges will often have numbers on them which can identify their location
- Do not attempt to go out on to the ice yourself
- Tell the person to stay still to maintain heat and energy
- Try finding something which will extend your reach, such as a rope, pole or branch
- Throw the object out and, once ensuring you are stable on the bank either by lying down or having someone hold on to you, pull them in
- If you cannot find something to reach with, try finding an object that will float and push that out to them
- Ensure that you keep off the ice at all times during the rescue, continue to reassure the casualty and keep them talking until help arrives
- Once the person has been rescued, keep them warm and take them to hospital even if they appear to be unaffected

As well as frozen-over water, WSS also want to urge the public to be aware of icy conditions which can make surfaces slippery and unstable, meaning the likelihood of slips, trips and falls is increased. Take extra caution when visiting coastlines and walking near cliff edges as icy conditions will make surfaces slippery.

For more information, please visit [www.watersafetyscotland.org.uk](http://www.watersafetyscotland.org.uk)