

# Ice Safety

Kodiak Alaska 08OCT13

Be prepared to self rescue. Folks trapped by the ice expecting rescue are waiting to be a frozen statistic.

Carry picks and a throw line. Picks need to be worn where they can be deployed quickly.

Use a buddy system.

Prepare by visualizing. Think about what you will do if you or your buddy fall through the ice. Practice with your picks as well as your throw line. Its not worth carrying gear you do not know how to use. Knowing what to do before it happens will save crucial time.

Check the whole area of the ice you intend to play on.

Trust your instinct. If you dont think the ice is strong enough, stay off it. **Verify the strength of the ice for yourself.** Do not be lured by others.

Swim out of the water to strong ice. It is crucial to get your legs into the surface plane. Attempting to pull yourself over the edge of the ice with your legs pointed at the bottom wont work. Kick hard with your legs instead. **Go back the way you came; it is the likeliest way to strong ice.** Spread your weight as much as possible once you have found stronger ice.

<http://lakeice.squarespace.com>

<http://kisar.org>

Inflatable PFD life vests work well. In my opinion auto inflatable vests inflate when you dont want them to. It is harder to swim out on to the edge of thin ice hampered by the Mae West effect.

The ice is never safe. There is always thin ice somewhere.

Have fun.

Dicky Saltonstall

