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FIRE DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 16, 2024

BE PREPARED – SAFETY TIPS WHEN OUT ON THE ICE

Caution - the ice you are standing on may not be as thick as you think it is

MUSCATINE, Iowa – There may have been plenty of open water before the recent deep freeze, but now creeks, ponds, lakes, and rivers are being coated with ice in varying thicknesses. That raises the concerns of public safety personnel who offer the following as part of their Community Risk Reduction efforts.



Every winter, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and first responders rescue people who have fallen through the ice or are stranded on a piece of ice far from shore.

If you should decide to venture out on ice, please make sure to adhere to the following tips:



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- Always let someone know where you're going and when you expect to return. Never go out alone.
- Wear a life vest under your winter coat, it will improve your survival odds if you fall in.
- Never walk or ice fish unless there is at least 4 inches of clear, solid ice underfoot.
- Be aware of stream inlets and outlets. Ice can vary in thickness due to the erosive action of the underlying current.
- Carrying a couple of large nails, ice picks or wooden-handle screwdrivers will give you a way to pull yourself back onto the ice if you fall through.
- In case someone accidentally falls through the ice, a nylon rope or walking stick will help you pull someone else out.

To report people, pets or wildlife that have fallen through the ice, call either 911 or the Muscatine County DNR officer 563-260-1223.

The National Fire Protection Association defines Community Risk Reduction (CRR) as "programs, actions, and services used by a community which prevent or mitigate the loss of life, property, and resources associated with life safety, fire, and other disasters within a community." The Muscatine Fire Department joins with their brothers and sisters across the United States in offering safety messages throughout the year.