



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®

The Lifeguarding Experts

# Newfoundland & Labrador ICE & WATER-RELATED FATALITIES

*A Special Report from the Lifesaving Society*

During the five-year period between 1998 and 2002, Newfoundland & Labrador has seen a total of 12 preventable ice-related snowmobiling deaths. Although these numbers have decreased over the past 10 years, National statistics show that Newfoundland & Labrador has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest fatality rate due to snowmobile drownings in Canada. 2002 drowning statistics show a dramatic change in the snowmobiling trends for this province, confirming that no snowmobiling-related drownings occurred during the 2002

### Number of Preventable Ice-Related Snowmobiling Deaths in Newfoundland and Labrador:

Year	Recreational	Daily Living	Total
1998	4	0	4
1999	0	1	1
2000	3	1	4
2001	3	0	3
2002	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>

year, this happening

only 3 times in the past 11 years.

In addition to snowmobile-related fatalities 5 victims from Newfoundland & Labrador drowned while walking on or near water (4)/ice (5) in the past 5 years. 89% of these incidences occurred on the ocean, while the remaining 11% occurred at a river or stream. Alcohol was a factor in just over 22% of these drownings and 3 of the 9 victims were alone at the time of the incident.

### Newfoundland & Labrador Water-Related Snowmobiling Deaths: 1998-2002 Five-year Totals

	Rec.	D.L.	Total
<b>Totals</b>	10	2	12
<b>WHO</b>			
<b>Age</b>			
<18			1
18-34			6
35-49			4
50+			1
<b>Sex</b>			
Male			10
Female			2
<b>WHEN</b>			
<b>Month</b>			
Nov-Dec			2
Jan-Apr			10
May-Oct			0
<b>Day</b>			
Mon-Thurs			5
Fri-Sun			7
<b>Time</b>			
5am-6pm			4
6pm-Midnight			4
Midnight-5am			2
Unknown			2
<b>WHERE</b>			
<b>Setting</b>			
Ocean			8
Lake/Pond			1
River/Stream			3

### Profile of Ice-Related Snowmobiling Fatalities

#### Who are the victims?

- ✓ 83% of snowmobile drowning victims are men
- ✓ 67% are between the ages of 18 and 49

#### When did fatal incidents occur?

- ✓ 83% occurred between the months of January and April
- ✓ 70% of the recreational snowmobiling incidents happened during the weekend, while all of the daily living snowmobiling incidents happened on weekdays.

#### What time of day did the incidents occur?

### Newfoundland & Labrador Snowmobiling Report

- ✓ 60% of the known times show that snowmobiling fatalities are most common between 6:00pm and 5:00am.

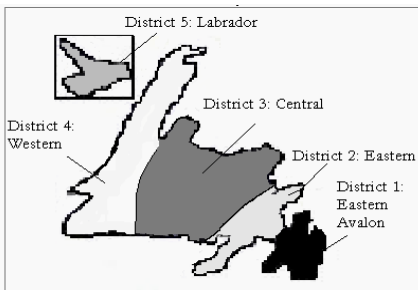
### Where did the fatalities occur?

- ✓ 75% of all snowmobiling fatalities in the past 5 years occurred in Labrador
- ✓ 8 incidents occurred on the Ocean, 3 on Rivers/Streams, & 1 incident occurred on Lakes/Ponds.

### Key Risk Factors:

- ✓ 42% of Newfoundland and Labrador ice-related snowmobiling deaths involved alcohol
- ✓ 60% of ice-related snowmobiling fatalities occurred during the hours of darkness.
- ✓ 58% of ice-related snowmobiling deaths can be attributed to driving on thin/soft ice, while 33% can be attributed to driving into open holes.
- ✓ 50% of snowmobile victims who drowned were not wearing any form of floatation device, while it is unknown if the remaining 50% of victims were wearing a floatation device.

## LOCATION OF SNOWMOBILE-RELATED DROWNINGS



Over the past 5 years, from 1998 to 2002, Labrador has seen the highest fatality rate involving snowmobile incidents, accounting for 9 of the 12 deaths. Snowmobile-related drownings account for approximately 50% of all the drownings that have occurred in Labrador over the past 5 years. The Labrador region consumed the lives of both victims that drowned during daily living activities. These statistics reflect the high usage of snowmobiles in this region of the island. Other areas that seen drowning deaths by snowmobile were Eastern, Central and Western Newfoundland, which were each the location of 1 snowmobile-relating drowning between 1998 and 2002.

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### BE WATER SMART™ ON ICE

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- **DON'T WALK, PLAY OR SNOWMOBILE ON THIN OR UNKNOWN ICE!**
- **RIDE SOBER AND DON'T DRIVE YOUR SNOWMOBILE ON ICE AFTER DARK!** Alcohol beverage consumption, along with riding after dark are the leading factors contributing to ice-related snowmobiling deaths.
- **RIDE IN DAYLIGHT!** If driving after dark, drive with extreme caution, proper lights and stay off ice.
- **DON'T RIDE ON ICE WHEN YOUR VISIBILITY IS IMPAIRED!** Ride at slow enough speeds so that you have time to react to surprises. Don't ride after dark, in blowing snow or heavy rain, and guard against snow blindness with UV-protective sunglasses.
- **WEAR A BUOYANT SNOWMOBILE SUIT.**
  - This will combat submersion and help protect against the numbing effects of hypothermia.
- **ALWAYS RIDE WITH A BUDDY!** 40% of snowmobiling immersion fatalities occurred when the victim was riding alone.
- **LEARN MORE ABOUT ICE SAFETY AND ICE RESCUE...GET THE LIFESAVING SOCIETY'S ICE SAFETY RESOURCE GUIDE "ICE: THE WINTER KILLER".**



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**The Lifesaving Society acknowledges assistance in preparing the Snowmobile Drowning Report from:**

- Office of the Chief Forensic Pathologist, NL  
Department of Justice
- Canadian Red Cross Society (CRCS)
- Lifesaving Society and CRCS volunteers and staff
- Canadian Coast Guard
- Environment Canada
- Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police