



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®

Canada's Lifeguarding Experts

2006 Edition Newfoundland and Labrador Snowmobiling Report

Newfoundland & Labrador ICE & WATER-RELATED FATALITIES

A Special Report from the Lifesaving Society

During the period between 1999 and 2004, Newfoundland & Labrador has seen a total of ten (10) preventable ice-related snowmobiling deaths. Although these numbers have decreased over the past 11 years, National statistics show that Newfoundland & Labrador has the third highest fatality rate due to snowmobile drownings in Canada. While 2002 drowning statistics showed a dramatic change in the snowmobiling trends for this province, confirming that no snowmobiling-related drownings occurred, 2003 reported two (2) deaths and 2004, unfortunately, seen two (2) deaths again this year.

In addition to snowmobile-related fatalities, 11 victims from Newfoundland & Labrador drowned while walking on or near water or ice during the past six years. 2004 saw one (1) ice related drowning involving a male in the 65+ age group. 82% (9 deaths) of these incidences occurred on the ocean, while the remaining 28% occurred at a river or stream. Alcohol was a factor in 36% of these drownings and the illegal drug cannabinoids was a factor in one (1) death in 2004. Eight of the eleven (11) victims were alone at the time of the incident.

Profile of Ice-Related Snowmobiling Fatalities

Who are the victims?

- ⌚ 90% of snowmobile drowning victims are male (2 victims in 2004)
- ⌚ 2004 reported no snowmobile drownings victims under age eighteen. Statistics shows 90% are between the ages of 13 and 49, 1 drowning in the 65+ age group. In 2004 the 13-49 age group saw an increase of 2% (1drowning in the 18-24 and one (1) in the 35-49 age group).

When did fatalities occur?

- ⌚ 100% occurred between January and April; January, March has seen an increase of 10% this year. February, March and December 2004 had one (1) preventable ice-related snowmobiling death each.
- ⌚ 70% of the recreational snowmobiling incidents took place during the weekend, an increase of 7% (3 deaths in 2004), while the daily living snowmobiling incidents reported no change.

What time of day did the incidents occur?

⌚ Almost 40% of snowmobiling fatalities occurred in the evening hours of 6pm to 10pm, while 25% occurred in the afternoon and 25% after midnight

Where did the fatalities occur?

⌚ Although there was only one (1) reported death in Labrador this year. 63% of all snowmobiling fatalities in the past 5 years occurred in Labrador

⌚ 3 incidents occurred on the Ocean, while zero occurred on Rivers/Streams these numbers are down 50% from the previous five years.

Key Risk Factors:

⌚ 100% of Newfoundland and Labrador ice-related snowmobiling deaths involved alcohol in 2004 compared to 50% in previous years

⌚ 100% of ice-related snowmobiling fatalities after dark, an increase of 4% from previous years

⌚ 100% of ice-related snowmobiling deaths in 2004 can be attributed to driving on thin/soft ice, an increase of 12% from 38% of snowmobiling drowning for the previous five-year statistics. There were no snowmobiling deaths attributed to driving into open holes in 2004.

⌚ 100% of snowmobile victims who drowned were not wearing any form of floatation device. This is alarming when compared to 50% in previous years.

2004 Newfoundland & Labrador Water-Related Snowmobiling Deaths:

<u>WHO</u>	<u>WHEN</u>	<u>WHERE</u>
Age	Month	Setting
<18 0	Nov-Dec 1	Ocean 3
18-34 1	Jan-Apr 2	River/Stream 0
35-49 1	May-Oct 0	
50+ 1	Day	
Sex	Mon-Thurs 2	
Male 3	Fri-Sun 1	
Female 0	Time	
	Afternoon 0	
	6pm-Midnight 1	
	After Midnight 0	
	Unknown 2	

LOCATION OF SNOWMOBILE-RELATED DROWNINGS

Over the past six years, Labrador has seen the highest fatality rate involving snowmobile incidents, accounting for 6 of the 10 deaths. There were no Snowmobile-related drownings in Labrador during 2004. The Labrador region did, however, consume the life of one victim who drowned during recreational activities. The victim was walking near more than 2.2 meters of water. These statistics reflect the high usage of snowmobiles in this region of the island. Other areas that have seen drowning deaths by snowmobile were: Eastern and Western Newfoundland, where each location had 1 snowmobile-relating drowning in 2004 while, Central Newfoundland saw zero (0) water-related snowmobile-related deaths.

BE WATER SMART™ ON ICE

- DON'T WALKPLAY OR SNOWMOBILEON THIN OR UNKNOWNICE!
- RIDE SOBER AND DONT DRIVE YOUR SNOWMOBILEON ICEAFTER 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 occur while people are riding alone.
- LEARN MORE ABOUT ICE SAFETY AND ICE RESCUE...GET THE LIFESAVING SOCIETY'S ICE SAFETY RESOURCE GUIDE "ICE: THE WINTER KILLER".

SWIM TO SURVIVE

The Canadian Swim to Survive standard is a simple straightforward and focused natural standard that defines the minimum swimming skills needed to survive an unexpected fall into deep water.

Roll into deep water – Tread water (1min) = Swim (50mtrs)

Learn more, take the Swim to Survive Challenge at your local pool.

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

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