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## THUNDER BAY OPP – FEBRUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER

### OPP NOW USING AERIAL AND UAS TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE SNOWMOBILE SAFETY

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are dismayed by the recurring causal factors in snowmobiler deaths, most notably, those that stem from snowmobilers travelling on unsafe ice again this season.

Three of this season's six snowmobilers who died were travelling on unsafe ice. Two of the snowmobilers went through the ice. In the third ice-related incident, the snowmobiler drove into open water. Speed, driving too fast for the conditions and alcohol/drugs were factors in the other three fatal incidents.

During the 2017/2018 season, three of the 14 snowmobilers who died were also travelling on unsafe ice when they drove into open water. Alcohol/drugs were linked to six of last season's fatalities and speed played a role in five of the deaths.

In an effort to enhance snowmobile safety, the OPP is now engaging its aviation and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS). Aviation support is an effective tool in a number of situations such as speed enforcement, search and rescue and detecting dangerous snowmobile operation. UAS support is a valuable resource at snowmobile collision scenes and for accessing locations that are inaccessible by other means.

"The use of OPP aviation and UAS support demonstrates our latest efforts to keep snowmobile communities safe. Despite our commitment to saving lives, our use of innovative technology and our valued partnership with the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs, it is not enough. We need all snowmobilers to understand that regardless of where they are riding, the only safe ride is a risk-free ride."

- Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair, Provincial Commander, Traffic Safety and Operational Support.

"Snowmobiling is a great way to explore the province in the winter, but we need everyone to be safe and obey the law. It doesn't matter whether you're driving a snowmobile, a car or any other type of vehicle - there's no place for impaired or unsafe drivers in Ontario."

- Kinga Surma, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Transportation



Ontario Provincial Police

## Newsletter

"Safety is a shared responsibility for every snowmobiler on OFSC Prescribed Snowmobile Trails. Riders should remember that no ice is safe ice. Travel on staked trails, and check the Interactive Trail Guide before you go. The OFSC commends the OPP for their continued dedication to ensuring our trails remain safe for riders of all experience levels."

- Ryan Eickmeier, Executive Director, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The new Mandatory Alcohol Screening laws that took effect on December 18, 2018 apply to drivers of all motor vehicles, including snowmobiles.

LEARN MORE: [OPP Provincial SAVE Unit](#)

[Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs](#)

### OPP REPORTING HOMICIDES ARE ON THE RISE

Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is reporting a surge in the number of homicides it is investigating.

Members of the OPP received 42 murder investigations to lead in 2018, up from 35 the previous year and a level not seen since 51 cases in 2010. Six of the homicides last year were investigated on behalf of other jurisdictions.

Homicides in OPP jurisdiction are investigated by local detachment detectives under the direction of a Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB) Detective Inspector.

In spite of efforts to reduce the inventory of available guns, a firearm was the primary cause of death in 18 OPP death investigations - higher than the previous two years combined (six in 2016; 10 in 2017) and seven more than in the record year of 2010. The number of occasions where a firearm is the identified cause of death is consistent with the trends reported in other major jurisdictions in Ontario.

### QUOTE

"To deliberately take another life is the most personal affront to public safety that we know. It is distressing to see an increase in the number of murders being committed in communities throughout Ontario."-- Deputy Commissioner Rick BARNUM, Provincial Commander - OPP Investigations and Organized Crime



## REMINDER TO ADJUST YOUR DRIVING FOR WINTER

- Slow down and drive according to weather conditions. Speed too fast for road conditions is the number one cause of winter collisions.
- Be prepared for rapidly changing conditions. Blowing snow may suddenly reduce visibility, and gusting winds can cause ice to form quickly.
- Leave extra space between vehicles. Stopping distances are at least double on snow covered roads and even longer on icy road conditions.
- Know where you are. Keep track of intersections and landmarks in case you need to call for help in an emergency situation.
- Monitor road and weather conditions. Check local weather and road conditions before heading out. If conditions are poor, consider delaying your trip until conditions improve.

OPP would like to remind motorists that during the early morning commute, the pavement on highways and roadways may appear to be dry and bare when in actuality the roads are frost covered and icy in some sections due to the extreme cold temperatures that we have been experiencing in the Thunder Bay area.

The OPP reminds motorists and the public not to call the OPP for road conditions. You can call 5-1-1 for interactive up to date road conditions anywhere in Ontario.

## “CARD NOT PRESENT” FRAUD

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) want to make the public aware of a fraud that is occurring throughout OPP detachment areas.

In this particular fraud the suspect calls the business and orders high priced items using a credit card. The suspect says his friend will pick the items up. Someone attends the business and picks the items up. A few weeks later the card turns out to be stolen or fraudulent.

The OPP would like all businesses to guard themselves against fraud. Some signs of fraud and useful tips to prevent fraud are:

- If someone makes a purchase over the phone with a credit card ask to see the credit card and identification at the time of pick up.
- Check the credit card for the name, numbers and expiry date.
- If someone is purchasing an unusual amount of expensive items.
- If someone is purchasing "big ticket" items with high resale value.



There are many other signs and indications of fraudulent behaviour when it comes to credit cards. Contact your bank, credit card provider or go online for more information. Just because you can't see the card holder doesn't mean you can't suspect fraud. It is important to be aware even for online or over the phone purchases.

## COLD WEATHER SAFETY TIPS

Canada has one of the most severe [winter climates](#) of any country in the world. Canadians across the country may face severe cold weather conditions that can affect their health. However, being active and enjoying winter activities and sports is a great way to stay healthy. Learn how to adjust to cold conditions so you can enjoy the winter weather.

### About extreme cold

Extreme cold is measured differently in different parts of the country. Whenever temperatures drop dramatically below normal, staying warm and safe can become challenging. In general, your risk of health effects like windburn and frostbite increase at [wind chill values](#) below -27.

The wind can make cold temperatures feel even colder. The [wind chill index](#) measures what the temperature feels like on exposed skin based on the speed of the wind. A [wind chill](#) can cause your body to lose heat faster and your skin to freeze very quickly. Wind chills below -70 have been recorded in some northern Canadian communities.

### Who is at risk?

While anyone who isn't dressed warmly is at risk in cold weather conditions, some are at greater risk than others for frost bite and hypothermia:

- homeless people
- outdoor workers
- people living in homes that are poorly insulated (with no heat or no power)
- people with certain medical conditions such as diabetes, peripheral neuropathy, and diseases affecting the blood vessels
- people taking certain medications including beta-blockers
- winter sport enthusiasts
- infants (under 1 year)
- seniors (65 years or older)



## Health risks of extreme cold

A normal body temperature is approximately 37°C (99°F). When your core body temperature drops by 1 or 2°C (1.8 or 3.6°F), or your body is exposed to severe cold it increases your risk of harmful effects.

## What is Windburn

Windburn occurs when cold wind removes the top layer of oil from the skin causing:

- excessive dryness
- redness
- soreness
- itchiness

Although windburn is different than [sunburn](#), people often confuse the two because the symptoms are similar.

## What is Frostbite?

When the temperature drops below 0°C (32°F), blood vessels close to the skin constrict to protect the core body temperature. When your body is exposed to the cold for a long period of time, blood flow to your hands, feet, nose, and ears can be severely restricted. The combination of poor circulation and extreme cold can lead to frostbite.

[Frostbite](#) generally occurs in body parts furthest from the heart:

- hands
- feet
- nose
- ears

Mild frostbite (frostnip) makes your skin look yellowish or white but it is still soft to the touch. Your skin might turn red during the warming process, but normal colour returns once the area is warmed.

Severe frostbite can cause permanent damage to body tissue if it is not treated immediately. Nerve damage occurs and frostbitten skin becomes discoloured and turns black. After some time, nerve damage becomes so severe that you will lose feeling in the affected area and blisters will occur. If the skin is broken and becomes infected, gangrene can set in which can result in loss of limbs.



## What is Hypothermia?

There are three stages of hypothermia:

- Stage 1 - When your body temperature drops by 1 or 2°C (1.8 or 3.6°F), you start shivering, get goose bumps on your skin, and your hands become numb. Your breath can become quick and shallow, and you may feel tired and/or sick to your stomach. You may also experience a warm sensation, which means your body is entering stage 2 of hypothermia.
- Stage 2 - Your body temperature has dropped by 2 - 4°C (3.8 - 7.6°F) and your shivering is strong. Muscles are uncoordinated and movements are slow and laboured. You may suffer mild confusion, become pale, and your lips, ears, fingers, and toes may turn blue.

Here's an easy test to check if you have stage 2 hypothermia:

Try touching your thumb to your little finger. If you can't, your muscles are not working properly and you're experiencing stage 2 hypothermia.

- Stage 3 - If your body temperature drops below 32°C (89.6°F), the shivering will stop but you'll have trouble speaking, thinking, and walking. You may even develop amnesia. When your body temperature drops below 30°C (86.0°F), exposed skin becomes blue and puffy, it will be hard to move your muscles and your behaviour becomes irrational. Your heart may be beating quickly but your pulse and breathing will decrease. At this stage you are at risk of dying.

## Treatments for extreme cold conditions

### Windburn

Do not scratch or rub the affected area--it can damage the skin.

- Apply a protective skin care product (e.g. therapeutic moisturizers) to the affected area(s) as needed to help relieve the symptoms of windburn.
- Use a protective lip balm to treat lips.



## Frostbite

Mild frostbite (frostnip) can be treated in two ways:

- Passive warming - move to a warm room, wrap yourself in blankets or reheat your body by skin-to-skin contact with another person.
- Active warming - this can be done along with passive warming. Add heat directly to the frostbitten area. The idea is to thaw the injured skin as quickly as possible without burning yourself. Thawing frostbitten skin is very painful so the injured skin should be placed in water that is just above body temperature. Do not rub, massage or shake the injured skin because that can cause more damage.

Severe frostbite requires immediate medical attention. While you are waiting for help to arrive begin treating it with passive and active warming.

## Hypothermia

Severe cases of hypothermia (such as stages 2 and 3) require immediate medical attention. Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number.

The following treatment options should be followed for [stage1 hypothermia](#), or while waiting for help to arrive for more severe hypothermia:

- find shelter
- keep your muscles moving
- dry and (gradually) warm your body
- wrap yourself in blankets/dry clothing or reheat your body by skin-to-skin contact with another person
- drink warm, sweet liquids
- don't fight shivering, this is one of the ways your body increases its core temperature
- if the person is unconscious lay them down and avoid shaking them or handling them roughly as they may have an arrhythmia (irregular heart beat)



## Reduce your risk

Protect yourself from extreme cold conditions by following these tips:

### Wear appropriate clothing

- Always wear clothing appropriate for the weather. Synthetic and wool fabrics provide better insulation. Some synthetic fabrics are designed to keep perspiration away from your body which keep you dry and further reduce your risk.
- Dress in layers with a wind resistant outer layer. You can remove layers if you get too warm (before you start sweating) or add a layer if you get cold.
- Wear warm socks, gloves, a hat and scarf in cold weather. Be sure to put a scarf over your nose to protect it.
- If you get wet, change into dry clothing as soon as possible. You lose heat faster when you're wet.

### Protect yourself

- On sunny days wear sun glasses, lip balm and sunscreen to protect your skin from UV rays and keep it moisturized to help prevent windburn.
- Wear a face mask and goggles if you are participating in winter activities such as skiing, snowmobiling and skating to protect your face from frostbite and windburn.
- Keep moving (especially your hands and feet) to keep your blood flowing and maintain your body heat.

### Know the weather conditions

- Pay attention to weather alerts in your area. Special weather statements and warnings are issued when extreme weather is possible in your area.
- Environment Canada issues wind chill alerts to warn you of conditions that will cause frostbite to exposed skin.





## Find shelter and keep moving

- If you are caught in a severe snowstorm, or outside in extreme cold conditions, look for shelter. If there are no buildings around, a small cave, ditch, hollow tree or a vehicle can help reduce your chances of frostbite or hypothermia.
- Even if you find shelter, keep moving to maintain your body heat.

## Winterize your home

- Prepare your home for cold winter temperatures by doing regular maintenance. Make sure your heating system is working efficiently and seal all cracks and drafts to [keep the heat in](#).

## Avoid alcohol

- Consuming alcohol before you go out in the cold may increase your risk of hypothermia because it increases blood flow to the extremities of the body. You may actually feel warm even though you are losing heat.

## Know your health risks

- Talk to your health care professional to see if you are at an increased risk from extreme cold due to a medical condition.
- If you have health problems such as a heart condition you may wish to avoid strenuous activities like shovelling snow.

The preceding information was provided by the Government of Canada.



Ontario Provincial Police

## Newsletter

### CRIME STOPPERS

Crime Stoppers look forward to continuing to work with the community on Crime Prevention initiatives. Keep in mind that if you have any information about any crime, we ask that you contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800- 222- TIPS or 623-TIPS or submit a web tip at <http://www.p3tips.com/273>. Remember your identity will remain anonymous and you could be eligible for a reward of up to \$2,000.00 and you will never have to testify in court.



If there are other topics you would like addressed in this newsletter or have some ideas, please do not hesitate to call me.

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