

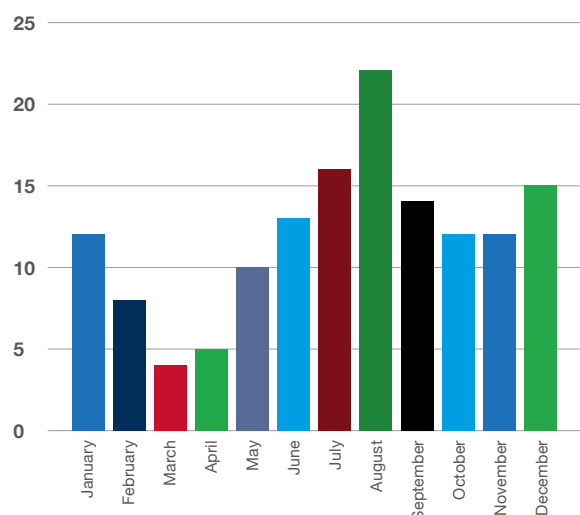
Ice Safety Communication Toolkit

With winter comes icy conditions and the increased risks associated with frozen bodies of water. Water Safety Wales urges everyone to be prepared and cautious, particularly near waterways like canals, rivers, and lakes.

While the link between hot weather and increased accidental drowning deaths is well established, WAID data (2019-2023) clearly shows that a substantial number of drownings also occur during cooler conditions, as illustrated in the table.

The safety messages below provide guidance on keeping yourself, loved ones, and pets safe during the winter months.

Further winter water safety messaging can be found on the Canal and River Trust and Royal Life Saving Society websites.



Key messages:

- **Stay off the ice**
 - Never walk or play on ice, as it's impossible to tell if it can bear weight.
- **Maintain a safe distance from water edges**
 - Snow and leaves can obscure the edge of paths, and icy surfaces increase the risk of slipping into freezing water. Always wear winter footwear with good grip.
- **Supervise children near water**
 - Keep children away from icy or frozen water areas and do not allow them to venture onto ice.
- **Keep control of pets**
 - Keep dogs on a lead near ice and avoid throwing sticks or balls onto frozen water. If a pet falls through the ice, follow the safety advice below rather than attempting a direct rescue.

What to do if you see someone in the water

- **Call for help.** Dial 999 and provide as accurate as information as you can
- **Stay off the ice.** Don't attempt to go onto the ice yourself, as this puts you at risk
- **Make and maintain contact** with the person in the water to reassure them that help is on the way
- **Look for rescue equipment.** There may be a life ring and throw line nearby. Alternatively look for something that could help such as a rope, branch, pole or clothing tied together
- **Use the equipment** to try to get the person to safety. Do not go onto the ice yourself – ensure you are back from edge and on stable ground

- **Assist from a safe distance.** If you cannot reach them, slide something which floats to them, such as a plastic bottle or football whilst you wait for the emergency services
- **Keep warm.** If you are able to get the person out safely, keep them warm until the emergency services arrive. It's important they get medical help even if they appear unharmed.

For a video talking about this advice, watch RoSPA's winter water safety guide: **RoSPA Ice Safety Video**.

What to do if your pet falls through the ice



- Do not attempt a direct rescue— this could put you at risk. Instead, encourage your dog to swim over to you so that you can lift them out
- Encourage your pet to swim to the shore where you can lift them out safely
- If they cannot reach you, use a branch or pole to reach them without venturing onto the ice.

What to do if you fall through the ice

1. Keep calm and call for help
2. Float on your back until you feel calm, then try to climb out of the ice by spreading your arms across the surface of the ice in front of you and pulling yourself out slowly.
3. If you cannot climb out, continue to float, remain calm and wait for the emergency services. Keep your head clear of the water.

Assets:

Coinciding with icy weather, Water Safety Wales will distribute a series of social media posts on its channels to reinforce these messages. Water Safety Wales members and partners are encouraged to share these posts to reach a wider audience.

Message 1	Image
<p>If you see someone in icy water, call 999 and don't go in after them. Reassure them and look for rescue equipment.</p> <p>→ Watch RoSPA's winter water safety video to learn more: https://youtu.be/g4xpNzSzGRY</p>	
<p>Gallai gwybod beth i'w wneud mewn argyfwng achub bywyd. Os byddwch chi'n cwmpo drwy'r rhew, peidiwch â chynhyrfu gan arnofio ar eich cefn.</p> <p>→ I gael rhagor o awgrymiadau, edrychwch ar gyngor RLSS UK ar y gaeaf: rlss.org.uk/News/royal-life-saving-society-uk-issues-winter-water-safety-advice</p>	

Message 2

Knowing what to do in an emergency could save a life. If you fall through the ice, stay calm and float on your back.

→ For more tips, visit RLSS UK's winter advice: rlss.org.uk/News/royal-life-saving-society-uk-issues-winter-water-safety-advice



Gallai gwybod beth i'w wneud mewn argyfwng achub bywyd. Os byddwch chi'n cwmpo drwy'r rhew, peidiwch â chynhyrfu gan arnofio ar eich cefn.

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X/Twitter link to share

Welsh - x.com/Water_Wales/status/1881709915544379768

English - x.com/Water_Wales/status/1881710113112899765

Message 3

If your pet falls through the ice, don't attempt to rescue them yourself. Encourage them to swim to you or use a branch to help.

→ For more information visit: canalrivertrust.org.uk/support-us/our-campaigns/safety-on-our-waterways/winter-water-safety



Os bydd eich anifail anwes yn syrthio drwy'r rhew, peidiwch â cheisio eu hachub eich hun. Anogwch nhw i nofio atoch chi neu defnyddiwch gangen i'w helpu.

→ Am fwy o wybodaeth ewch i: canalrivertrust.org.uk/support-us/our-campaigns/safety-on-our-waterways/winter-water-safety



X/Twitter link to share

Welsh - x.com/Water_Wales/status/1881710545033908514

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