

## **SAFETY ALERT**

From the Prospectors and Developers Association and the Association for Mineral Exploration  
British Columbia

### **WORKING ON ICE**

There was a fatality in late 2007 when a bulldozer went through ice in the Northwest Territories. The exact cause is not clear at this time. Another person died in Quebec a few years ago when the bulldozer he was driving broke through ice lying over what was thought to be frozen ground but, in fact, was a small water body in a swamp. As well as implementing careful protocols, companies conducting drilling or other operations on ice need to take into account the following points:

- Although there are specific ice thickness recommendations for particular weights of machinery, other factors can play a role in safety. For example, irrespective of its thickness, ice may have penetrating cracks or weaknesses that can tilt, causing people or equipment to slide into the water. Crews should check carefully for any discontinuities in the ice, such as cracks or pressure ridges.
- Ice thickness can change dramatically where there is flowing water.
- It is critical that all machinery being driven on ice provides a way for a person to escape from the cab regardless of whatever prior precautions have been taken.
- The nature of the ground being travelled over should be well understood. What appears to be solid ground in winter may, in fact, be soft swamp or even deep water covered in ice that cannot bear the weight of a bulldozer. Knowledge of the ground in summer should be taken into account before travelling across it during the winter.

### **TENT HEATER SAFETY**

There was a fatality in late 2007 as result of a tent fire at night. The occupant was asleep. All tents should be equipped with working smoke detectors and CO detectors with operational batteries as a matter of standard equipment. The smoke detectors should be regularly checked to ensure that they are in working order.

If you have any questions or comments, please email [Saley Lawton](mailto:Saley.Lawton@pdac.ca) at the PDAC or [Jonathan Buchanan](mailto:Jonathan.Buchanan@amebc.ca) at AMEBC.

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