



LAKE MINNETONKA WINTER RULES

— 2024/25 —

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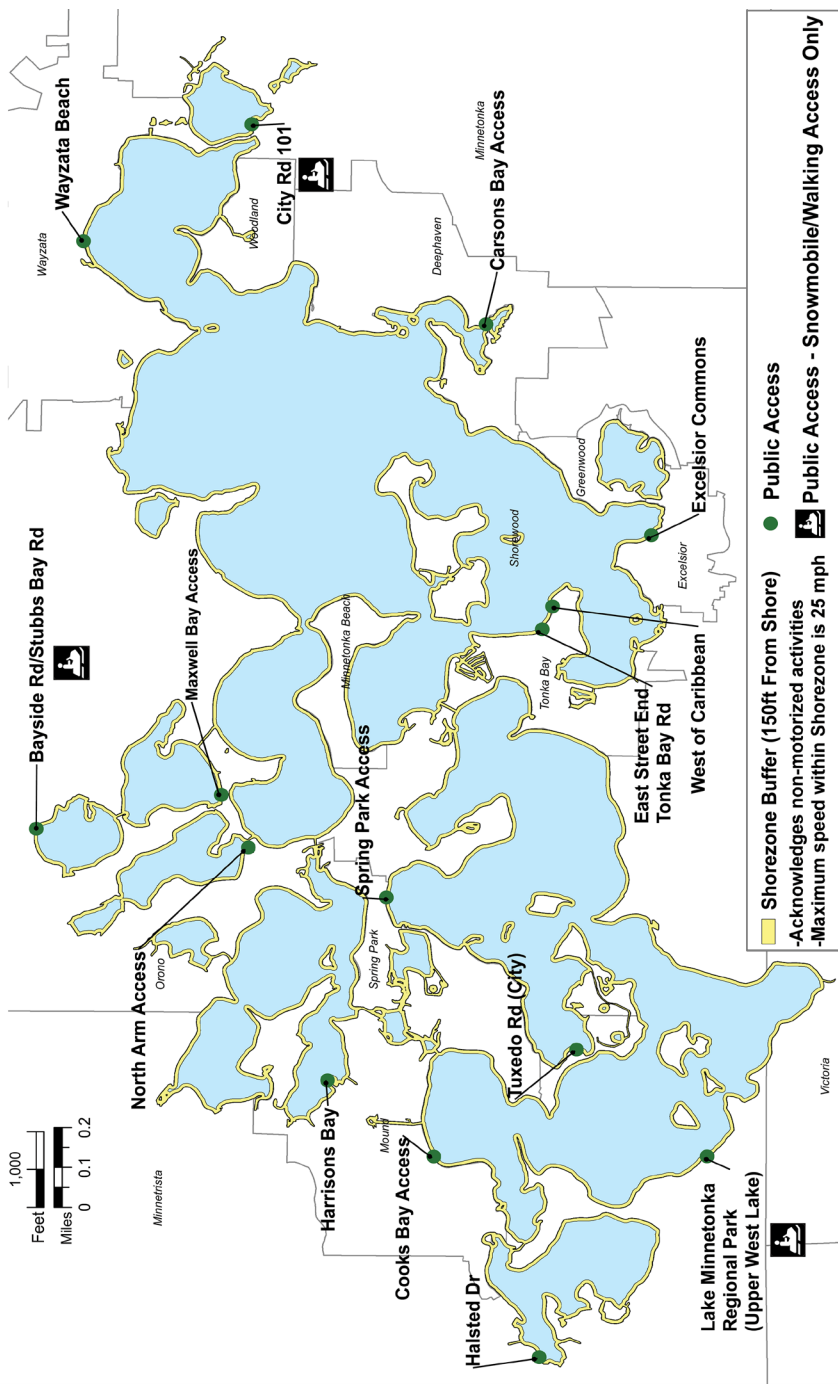
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This brochure is a summary of the most common rules of conduct for Lake Minnetonka. These regulations help protect the lake and public health, safety and welfare. Thank you for your cooperation.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

For more than 50 years, the Lake Minnetonka Conservation District (LMCD) has been managing the use of Lake Minnetonka in its mission to preserve and enhance the “Lake Minnetonka experience.” The LMCD is a regional governmental agency that brings together 14 different cities, two counties, and many state and local agencies to protect, preserve and enhance Lake Minnetonka’s economy and vitality.





Winter access: The lake must be entered at one of the designated public access sites (see map above) or from your own property, unless you have written permission from another property owner to use their property.



TOP WINTER VIOLATIONS

Be mindful of the rules and use common sense so everyone can have a safe and enjoyable time on the lake.

1 ICE SHELTER & VEHICLE REGISTRATION

All portable and non-portable ice shelters left unattended must be licensed through the MN DNR. The ice shelter license must be readily visible from the shelter's exterior. Ice shelters left out overnight must have at least two square inches of reflective material on each side.

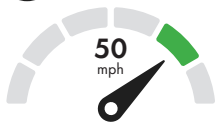
All snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and off-road vehicles (ORVs) must be registered through the MN DNR.

2 SHORE ZONE & SPEED LIMIT VIOLATIONS

The shore zone (within 150 feet of shore) helps protect non-motorized activities, such as snowshoeing, skating and cross-country skiing. Motor vehicles may traverse the shore zone by the shortest direct route but are prohibited from driving faster than 25 mph.



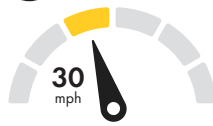
DAYTIME



50 mph outside shore zone
half hour before sunrise
to half hour before sunset



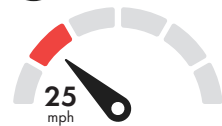
NIGHTTIME



30 mph outside shore zone
half hour before sunset to
half hour before sunrise
(50 mph for snowmobiles)



ALL TIMES



25 mph at all times within 150
feet of people and property,
channels, and all of Black,
Emerald and Seton Lakes.

ATVs: 10-mph limit within 100
feet of a person not on an ATV or
within 100 feet of a fishing shelter.

3 LITTERING & WASTE

Under Minnesota's new **Keep It Clean law**, it is illegal to place any garbage or waste on or under the ice on lakes and rivers. All rubbish, pet feces, cigarette filters and other litter must be stored inside a shelter or vehicle. Do your part by planning ahead for trash removal, using brightly colored bags that are easier to see and making sure all garbage is secure before departing.

4 NOT ENOUGH REFLECTIVE MATERIAL ON ICE SHELTERS

Ice shelters left out overnight must have at least 2 square inches of reflective material on each side.

TOP WAYS TO PREVENT ACCIDENTS

Always follow safety precautions and avoid these common causes of accidents and injuries:

- **Under the influence** of drugs and alcoholic beverages.
- **Passing through channels** and other areas with unsafe ice depths.
- **Unsafe speeds** for the conditions, such as low visibility times such as dusk or snowfall.
- **Unexpected hazards** such as pressure ridges, structures or temporary hazards, etc.
- **Lack of safety equipment and winter preparedness** when bad things happen.

REPORT ACCIDENTS IMMEDIATELY

If an accident occurs, **report it immediately**. If a snowmobile or other vehicle falls through the ice, notify Hennepin County Sheriff's Office—even if there are no injuries — to avoid unnecessary search and rescue efforts.

ICE & COLD WATER SAFETY

The MN DNR does not measure ice thickness on Minnesota lakes. Your safety is your responsibility—check ice thickness at least every 150 feet using an ice chisel, ice auger or a cordless 1/4 inch drill with a long bit. Ice thickness and strength can vary drastically over the same body of water. White ice is half as strong as newer, clear ice

For your safety:

- Always wear a life jacket and cold weather protection gear
- Carry ice picks
- Check weather and water temperatures
- Let someone know your location and schedule

THIN ICE/OPEN WATER BARRIERS: The HCSO Water Patrol may place markers or signs near thin ice or open water. It is unlawful and dangerous to disobey, drive or walk in these areas. Do not move signs.

DE-ICING/OPEN WATER REGULATIONS: Where allowed by LMCD, underwater bubblers (aerators) may be used to open water around docks. These sites are required to be properly lit and clearly identified. For safety, stay clear of these areas.

WATER SKIPPING IS PROHIBITED: Skipping motorized vehicles over open water is dangerous and strictly prohibited.



ICE FISHING, EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Cut ice safety hazard: Pieces of ice cut from the Lake can pose a safety hazard and must be removed from the surface—put it back in the hole or slide it under the ice.

Ice house safety & removal deadline: Implement safe practices, such as identification, minimum location distance of 10 feet or more depending on safe ice depth, access from outside, carbon monoxide prevention and good sanitation. Dark houses, fish houses and portables must be off Lake Minnetonka ice no later than midnight on the first Monday in March.

SPECIAL EVENTS & TEMPORARY STRUCTURES

Permits are required for most special events and temporary structures, such as rink walls. Visit the Hennepin County Sheriff Office's website to learn more and apply: HennepinSheriff.org/Water-Patrol/Water-Permits-Forms.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

Nuisances: No person may commit or engage in any activity that constitutes a public nuisance—including excess noise, bright light or glare, inappropriate behavior, indecent exposure, etc.

Littering: Be sure to carry out what you carry in and properly dispose of litter, trash, propane tanks and garbage properly on land. Please help keep the lake clean by removing any litter you notice.

Plan ahead for sanitation: If portable bathroom facilities are not available, find a location with public facilities to dispose of bodily waste.

SNOWMOBILE SAFETY CERTIFICATE

Any resident of Minnesota born after December 31, 1976, must have a snowmobile safety certificate, drivers license or ID card with snowmobile indicator in order to operate a snowmobile in Minnesota.

For non-residents of Minnesota, certification for snowmobile training in another state will be accepted in Minnesota. Non-residents 18 years of age and older DO NOT need a snowmobile safety certificate.

Youth regulations: Regulations are in place to minimize safety risks for youth drivers and passengers. This includes requiring helmets for everyone under age 18.

To review all regulations, visit: dnr.state.mn.us/regulations/snowmobile.

ATV SAFETY CERTIFICATE

Any resident of Minnesota born after July 1, 1987, and who is 16 years of age or older, must successfully complete the independent study course component of all-terrain vehicle safety training before operating an all-terrain vehicle on public lands or waters, public road rights-of-way, or state or grant-in-aid trails.

Youth regulations: Regulations are in place to minimize safety risks for youth drivers and passengers. This includes requiring helmets for everyone under age 18.

Visit the Minnesota DNR website to review all regulations: dnr.state.mn.us/regulations/ohv.

TIPS TO PREVENT WINTER SPREAD OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

Certain aquatic invasive species (AIS) found in Lake Minnetonka, such as curly-leaf pondweed and Eurasian watermilfoil remain hardy in winter. Help preserve and protect waterways for generations to come by taking time to clean, drain and dry all water-related equipment as you leave a water access.

Prevent the spread of AIS this winter:

- 1 Inspect machinery and equipment, such as ice augers, snowmobiles and fishing equipment for attached aquatic plants, animals or mud.
- 2 Remove all attached plants or animals from machinery and equipment.
- 3 Drain all water from livewells, buckets and other equipment.
- 4 Never move live fish away from a waterbody.
- 5 Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.





Lake Minnetonka Conservation District (LMCD)

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Connect with us at:

Email: lmcd@lmcd.org

Website: lmcd.org

 [LakeMinnetonkaConservationDistrict](https://twitter.com/LakeMtnkaCD)

 [@LakeMtnkaCD](https://www.facebook.com/LakeMtnkaCD)

- Lake Safety Administration
- Docks, licenses and permits
- Lake Minnetonka Conservation and Preservation
- Save the Lake Program



Hennepin County Sheriff's Office (HCSO)

Water Patrol Unit
4141 Shoreline Drive
Spring Park, MN 55384

EMERGENCY: Call 911

Non-Emergency 24/7 Dispatch: 952-258-5321; Office: 612-596-9880

Website: HennepinSheriff.org/water-patrol

- Patrol and enforcement of State and LMCD laws on Lake Minnetonka
- Emergency and rescue operations
- Special events and temporary structure permits



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)

Conservation Officers
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155

DNR Information Center: 651-296-6157 or 888-MINNDNR (646-6367)

Officer Locator: mndnr.gov/officerpatrolareas

Website: mndnr.gov

- Ice safety and vehicle escape plans
- State permits, licenses and regulations
- Snowmobile and ATV regulations
- Fishing permits