

The Canadian Thaw: getting ready for spring after winter

Posted by [Red Cross Talks](#) - Red Cross blogger

The sun is getting stronger, winter gear is slowly diminishing, blossoms are beginning to show, hope is starting to grow – it's springtime! In Canada, there are a few things to keep in mind to be ready for specific emergencies the new season can bring, such as increased risk of flooding as snow melts away.



There is also ice safety to consider. Changing air temperatures also affect ice thickness. While it is fun to skate on frozen ponds, be aware of ice stability prior to stepping on it. Then there's seasonal road safety and minimizing risks there.

With all that in mind, here are our tips to help get you ready for a fun and safe spring!

Preparing for flooding

Flooding is the most frequent natural disaster in Canada and spring months increase the risk of flooding. To prepare your home in case of flooding, as well as what to do in case a flooding does occur:

- Know the flood risk in your community by calling your municipality and insurance company.
- Monitor local weather and alerts
- Protect your valuables in waterproof containers. Place them above potential water levels.
- Put sealant around basement windows and the base of ground-level doors.
- Talk with your family and neighbours about what you would do during a flood.
- Have practice drills with your family, so you know what to do and are prepared.
- Have an emergency kit ready to go – and remember to include personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks.
- Know what to do during and after flooding as well.

Being safe around ice

The colour of ice may be an indication of its strength. Clear blue ice is strongest. White opaque or snow ice is half as strong as blue ice. Opaque ice is formed by wet snow freezing on the ice. Grey ice is unsafe. The grayness indicates the presence of water.

Ice thickness should be:

- 15 cm for walking or skating alone
- 20 cm for skating parties or games
- 25 cm for snowmobiles.

Check with local authorities before heading out. Avoid going out on ice at night. Learn more about [ice safety](#).

Safe spring driving

Don't jump into spring so quickly that it could increase risks, such as removing snow tires too early. Be aware of road conditions, including black ice, and make sure you have an emergency kit for your car. Remember to include personal protective equipment like masks in the car emergency kits as well.

If you don't have one, here's how to make an [emergency kit for your car](#).

Be Ready

Being prepared means thinking about the possibilities. Consider if you live alone or with a family; if you have children or people who need additional support due to health or mobility issues; if you live in a high rise, a basement apartment or a house.

1. [Know the risks](#) in your community
2. Have an [emergency plan](#) in place
3. Prepare an [emergency kit](#)