

# HENNEPIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## News Release



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### **Snowmobile falls into open water**

**March 24, 2011 (MINNEAPOLIS)** – At approximately 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 23, the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office responded to a report of a snowmobile in the water in a channel of Lake Minnetonka.

Earlier, two men operating snowmobiles had been hydroplaning across an area of open water – which is known as “skipping.” One snowmobile did not clear the open water at St. Albans Bay channel and the snowmobile sank into the lake, 100 feet west of the bridge.

The driver of that snowmobile fell into the water with his sled; he pulled himself onto the ice, and walked to shore. He was not injured. He is a 19-year old man from Orono. State law requires that in these incidents, the snowmobile operator must make arrangements for it to be removed from the lake.

The driver of the other snowmobile is a 19-year-old man from Wayzata. Both men were cited for careless operation.

HCMC, the DNR, and South Lake Minnetonka Police also responded to the scene.

#### **Thin Ice & Open Water Warning**

The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office is urging people to stay off of all lakes, rivers, ponds, and bodies of water due to widespread areas of thinning ice and open water.

- On all bodies of water, the latest snowfall may give ice the appearance that it is safe when it is not.
- Snowmobile operators are also advised to stay off of lakes. On Lake Minnetonka and all bodies of water, there are areas of open water.

- Small bodies of water, such as rivers, ponds and creeks are a hazard and should be avoided due to deteriorating ice or areas of open water.
- Many children are on Spring Break now or in the coming weeks. Parents and guardians are warned to keep children away from all bodies of water, thin ice, and flooded areas.
- Remember to keep your dog on a leash. The Sheriff's Office has responded to incidents involving pet owners who put themselves in jeopardy chasing after a dog that wandered onto the ice.

For media inquires, contact PIO Lisa Kiava at 612-919-5918 or [lisa.kiava@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:lisa.kiava@co.hennepin.mn.us)

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