

Safe snowmobiling means not going out until it is safe: OPP

During Snowmobile Safety Week, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) reminded snowmobilers to stay off Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) Trails, which remain closed at this time.

They are also urging snowmobilers to stay off frozen waterways, which unseasonably mild temperatures have made particularly unpredictable and unsafe throughout the province.

In the past 10 years, 158 snowmobilers did not make it home to their families in what were almost all preventable riding incidents, say Police. Common factors included driving too fast for the conditions, alcohol/drugs and riding on unsafe frozen waterways. 41 per cent of the fatalities were linked to alcohol/drugs and 36 per cent of them occurred on frozen lakes and rivers (in OPP jurisdictions).

Added Rohan Thompson, Deputy Commissioner of Traffic Safety and Operational Support for the OPP, added: "Safe and responsible snowmobiling means not going out if there is any doubt about whether it is safe to do so. This cannot be overstated where frozen waterways are involved, which are never guaranteed to be 100 per cent safe. Making smart decisions before and during your ride, such as always riding sober and drug-free, is what will get you home to your family."

The OPP remains committed to saving lives on more than one million square kilometres of land and waterways throughout the province.

Snowmobile Safety Week ran from January 13 to 21, 2024.