

Ice-Off and Ice-On Information Sheet: Rawson Lake (239)

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Ice-Off and Ice-On Records

The beginning and end of ice cover on Rawson Lake (239) have been observed since 1969. The date of "ice -off" is defined as being the date on which no significant ice remains. The ice usually melts quickly, within a day or two, once the "candled" ice sheet has broken up. Ice-on is defined as the date that the ice cover has reached 80% or greater. It is not the date on which ice first appears along shorelines and small bays. Normally the main body of the lake freezes over all at once in one night. However, in some years, the lake has frozen to approximately 70-80% cover and lingered for a few days before completely freezing over.

Rawson Lake is the only lake at ELA for which there are continuous records of ice-on and ice-off dates. These records serve as a useful index of when other lakes may have iced over or opened up. It has been observed that lakes in the area having smaller surface area and less depth are usually a few days to a week in advance of Lake 239 in both respects. Similarly, larger lakes freeze over and break-up anywhere from a few days to a few weeks later.