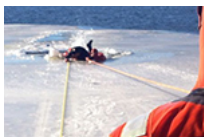


Man Rescued After Falling Through Ice While Trying To Save Dog **News**

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(STLToday.com) - A man who fell through the ice at Creve Coeur Lake while trying to retrieve his dog was saved by firefighters in ice suits Sunday afternoon, after a bystander called for help.



The man reached his dog and helped the dog back onto the ice, a bystander told firefighters. The man then fell through the ice and was submerged for a short time about 75 feet from shore.

Maryland Heights Fire Capt. Robert Daus Jr. said the man, who was in his late 60s and from the Chesterfield area, was hypothermic when rescuers reached him. He was treated in the ambulance and taken to an area hospital.

“It had a good ending,” Daus said. “The prognosis is good.”

The dog, who appeared to be a chocolate Lab, was able to crawl out of danger and get back to shore across the ice.

Maryland Heights and Pattonville fire protection districts answered the 911 call about 2:45 p.m.

“While en route, we got in our ice rescue suits and started getting out equipment, so we were ready to go when we got there,” Daus said.

The man had gone onto the ice for his dog, who was not on a leash.

Rescuers used a rope to reach the man and pull him out, with a team of rescuers on shore. The two groups used hand signals to communicate with each other.

The man could barely speak when rescued, Daus said. Because he is deaf, or severely hearing impaired, he could not hear the rescuers calling to him. He was conscious and talking when they reached him. Two ambulances were waiting on shore.

“From the time we were dispatched to the time he was out of the water was five minutes,” Daus said. He said the departments had trained together on ice rescues.

“It pays off the training and the hours that go into pre-planning and buying the right equipment,” he said, “It was busy at the park, and bystanders were really helpful.”

A dog was rescued from the icy lake in late December. However, that owner remained on shore and called 911. Daus said that was the proper response. The ice may sustain a dog but not necessarily a person.

“The roller coasters of weather we’re having are cold and then warm, freezing and thawing and refreezing makes for weak ice,” Daus said. “That’s part of the problem.”