



Title:	Lake Aeration Projects – Public Warning and Protection Requirements
Number:	AEP, Administration, 2016, No.2
Program Name:	Fish and Wildlife Policy
Effective Date:	Dec. 1, 2015
This document was updated on:	Dec. 1, 2015

Lake aerating equipment is operated during winter on some productive small lakes to minimize the risk of fish kills from severe winter conditions. Operation of aerators may create areas of open water and thin ice making them a potential hazard to the public. Section 263(1) of the Criminal Code of Canada specifies that anyone who makes, or causes to be made holes in the ice have a duty to both warn and protect the public from this danger.

This policy and procedures describes the basic minimum requirements that must be satisfied to operate aeration systems on publicly accessible waters in Alberta.

POLICY:

The Department of Environment and Parks will not operate aerating equipment that creates thin ice or open water on lakes unless these public warning and protection procedures are followed.

PROCEDURES:

1. Public notices must be placed in local and regional newspapers and accessible online (MyWildAlberta) to advise the public that thin ice and open water exists on aerated lakes. Notices must include the lake name and location and be published about one month prior to expected freeze-up and once at the start of every subsequent month during operation.
2. At least two highly visible and easily readable signs a minimum of 0.5 square metres in size, reading “DANGER! LAKE AERATION IN PROGRESS. WEAK ICE AND OPEN WATER” must be erected on every public access to aerated lakes. Substitution of the word “THIN” for “WEAK” is acceptable.
3. Fences must be erected around aerator(s) using fence material that creates a visible barrier extending not less than 1.1 m above the surface. Alternatively, fences may be maintained on land around all portions of the lake perimeter where access is physically possible. All fences must be designed to persist as a barrier of sufficient diameter around aerator(s) to contain all open water during mild winter operating conditions.
4. Highly visible and clearly readable signs reading “DANGER-KEEP AWAY FROM FENCE, WEAK ICE AND OPEN WATER!” must appear on all fences located on ice. Substitution of the word “THIN” for “WEAK” is acceptable. For fences on land, wording must be the same as indicated in procedure #2 (above). All fences must have signs which are a minimum of 0.25 square metres in size attached once every 15 metres.
5. The department will establish a formal schedule of inspection, maintenance and reporting log to monitor the on-going effectiveness of these procedures on each lake.
6. In accordance with the formal schedule of inspection, during the operation of aeration equipment, inspections at each aerated lake must be complete. Reports must include the physical inspection of all equipment, and reporting of any corrective measures taken to meet the requirements of this policy and be made available to department staff.

7. Emergency procedures and contacts in the event of an accident will be developed and available for each lake.
8. Winter Fishing Events on aerated lakes will require the posting of a guard(s) at the fence. Guards must be in place for the duration of the event.

Aeration systems causing areas or open water in ice will only be operated where procedures identified in this policy are in place.

Original signed by:

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April 7, 2016

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Date