

Tragedy on Ice - Brothers Die Trying to Rescue Dog from Frozen Lake

Attorney Paul Dansker recommends proper safety measures during winter

New York, NY – (February 4, 2010) – Christmas weekend was not celebratory for a Northern California family that lost two adult sons in a tragic accident, according to a December 2009 Associated Press. Trying to rescue the family dog from a frozen lake, the brothers ventured onto thinning ice and trapped under the lake surface when the ice broke. Paul Dansker, Esq., a New York City-based personal injury attorney, notes that the untimely deaths, as well as hypothermia injury to a third brother, could have been prevented with attention to simple winter safety measures.

Winter-related injuries and fatalities are all too common. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, more than a half million winter fires each year – many from faulty or unsafe home heating – cause close to 2,000 deaths, nearly 8,000 injuries and billions of dollars of property loss.

“Older adults, home owners, and parents should take simple extra precautions to protect themselves, their family and friends, and their property.” advises Dansker.

Advice for Seniors

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports falls as the top cause of unintentional injury in all adults and of injury-related deaths among older adults. Falls are more common in the winter months, when outdoor surfaces can become slippery or icy.

“To prevent falls, older adults should avoid slippery surfaces whenever possible and wear shoes with non-skid soles. Worn rubber and non-skid tips on canes and walkers should also be replaced regularly. Older adults should be deliberate in movement,” said Dansker. He also cautions seniors to dress warmly inside and outside the home, since older adults’ bodies have trouble maintaining proper temperature.

Dansker advises that “personal safety is particularly important when shoveling snow to prevent falls, hypothermia, or even a heart attack from overexertion.” He added that hiring someone to shovel and treat the driveway and sidewalks is money well-spent.

Stay Safe at Home

Keeping home heating systems in working order goes a long way toward preventing injuries and

deaths at home. Dansker recommends taking the following safety measures:

- 1) keep home heating systems in proper working order;
- 2) never heat a home with a stove or oven;
- 3) install smoke alarms throughout the home and replace batteries at least twice a year;
- 4) install carbon monoxide alarms in the house and become familiar with the poisoning symptoms of headache, nausea, and confusion;
- 5) post important phone numbers – gas or oil company, electric company, emergency heat agency, landlord, fire department – in a visible location;
- 6) store extra blankets, food that does not require refrigeration or cooking, water, flashlights with batteries, and other supplies in case of a power outage.

Safety on the Road

Automobiles should have:

- adequate amounts of radiator antifreeze and windshield wiper fluid,
- properly-working wiper blades, and
- enough gasoline.
- Check tire treads and replace tires that are worn.
- Pack a winter emergency kit that includes blankets, food, water, booster cables, sand or kitty litter, flares, and other supplies that may be necessary if a car dies or gets stuck during a snowstorm or cold snap.

Dansker advises drivers to clear as much snow and ice as possible off automobiles before driving. “Otherwise, a sheet of ice or hard-pack snow can fly off and potentially damage other cars on the road,” he said. When road conditions are snowy or icy, drivers should use extra caution.

When Outdoors

Outdoor safety during the winter calls for common sense. Dansker reinforces the importance of dressing in layers to keep warm and of wearing boots that protect feet from both cold and slippery surfaces. Bring a cell phone whenever possible, along with identification in the event of an injury.

Dansker also recommends that homeowners shovel sidewalks, walkways and driveways to make them less slippery.

Dansker & Aspromonte Associates

PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEYS

“Use outdoor lighting to illuminate property and outline walkways. Simple measures can help prevent injury to family members and passersby.”

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About Dansker & Aspromonte Associates:

Dansker & Aspromonte Associates is a New York City-based personal injury law firm that represents individuals seriously injured as the result of construction and motor vehicle accidents; medical malpractice; falls; brain injuries; sexual assaults; lead paint ingestion and more. The firm has represented thousands of clients and obtained hundreds of millions of dollars on their behalf in over thirty years in practice.