



The Importance of Doing Ice Measurements

By Ed Dockter

Imagine what your customers think when they see you walking around your ice surface, drilling holes in it! To them it probably seems crazy, but recreation professionals know doing frequent ice taps may be the smartest thing to do. Documenting these findings is even smarter.

Why do ice measurements? Two simple reasons: thin ice is dangerous and thick ice is costly to maintain. With thin ice, skates can do down to the cement and cause serious injuries and you also risk losing revenue while dealing with the embarrassment of having to do repairs to your product. Thick ice takes longer to freeze so your compressors run longer and work harder to do the job. Documenting your findings allows you to look back on past practice, benchmark and if need arises, legal teams will have access to the information they need.

Doing an ice tap involves using a cordless drill with a bit no larger than 3/16. At pre-determined places on your ice surface, you drill down to cement, marking the drill bit – once it's stopped moving – with your finger and transferring that to a ruler or tape measure. The space from the tip of the bit to your finger is the thickness of your ice. Write that measurement down in the corresponding spot on the Ice Tap Sheet. Every facility has different places for doing taps, some do ten different places, others 20 or more. You should include all 4 corners (about 30 to 60 cm out from the dashers), around your goal creases and face off circles and in areas where you've had problems in the past. An ice tap sheet should be filed away and a copy left for resurfacer operators so they know where the thin areas are and can adjust accordingly. If you can, invest in a handheld infrared thermometer and take ice *surface* temperature readings at the same time.

Arena Ice Measurements

Date and Time _____ Name _____

Relative Humidity _____ Secondary Refrigerant To Floor Temp _____ From Floor _____

