

Firefighters ready in case someone falls through ice

It's one thing to take a life-saving class in a pool in a rather controlled environment. It's another to train in the middle of winter, in icy water – outdoors.

Dressed in odd looking wetsuits, South Lake Tahoe firefighters plunged into Lake Tahoe on Friday morning. It was all in the name of ice rescue training.



South Lake
Tahoe fire
Capt. Fred
Vermillion
paddles Jan.
27 to a
"victim" in
the Tahoe Keys
Marina.

Photo/SLTFD

Each year firefighters take to the waters as the ice is melting from the lake or canals in the Tahoe Keys.

Instead of being on a surfboard, they use a Homatro rescue board to paddle to the victim. That's because the board is designed for a victim to be placed on, with a rope attached for the firefighters to pull the person to shore.

While ice rescues are not common, they are a reality. A vehicle could skid off the road, landing in the lake, Emerald Bay or American River. Or an ice skater could fall through the thin ice.

– Lake Tahoe News report