



Radial Ice Quick Refresher

In Effect Winter 2026

- Beginning winter of 2026, the National Weather Service will standardize forecasting and reporting radial ice, replacing the previous policy of forecasting and reporting “elevated flat ice”.
- Radial ice measurements will be about **60% less** than flat surfaces, **but the impacts of the ice are no less significant** for a given amount. With the technical lowered measurements, Winter Storm Warnings may be issued based on expected ice load and wind impacts, rather than definitive criteria, as warning criteria is not changing.

Radial Ice = 0.394 x Flat Ice

Radial Ice	Flat Ice	
0.01-0.04"	0.01-0.09"	Winter Weather Advisory criteria (based on 0.04" - 0.24" radial ice)
0.05-0.09"	0.10-0.24"	
0.10-0.14"	0.25-0.49"	
0.15-0.24"	0.50-0.74"	
0.25-0.49"	0.75-0.99"	Winter Storm Warning criteria* (based on 0.25" - 0.75"+ radial ice)
0.50-0.74"	1.00-1.99"	
0.75" +	2.00" +	

* Winter Storm Warnings may be issued based on expected amounts and impacts, rather than criteria.

Measuring Radial Ice:

1. Locate an ice-covered object that is out in the open, such as a small tree branch.
2. Position yourself to see both the thickest and thinnest ice portions around the entire object.
3. Using a ruler, measure the thickest part of the ice, from the edge of the object to the edge of the ice.
4. Measure the thinnest part of the ice using the same method.
5. Average the two measurements (add together and divide by two) to calculate radial ice.



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Total Measurement = 1.00"
Branch = 0.50"
Total Ice Thickness = 0.50"
Radial Ice Thickness = 0.25"
(Flat Ice x 0.394)

For reference to compare the current forecast of radial ice vs. flat ice, visit the Snow/Ice tab under [weather.gov/akq/Brief](https://www.weather.gov/akq/Brief)

