

COVID Preparedness Plan

Ely Winter Festival

The Ely Winter Festival is a 10-day winter event that promotes the Ely area through business-provided winter events including a snow sculpture event and a local art walk from Feb 4-14. The festival is managed by a volunteer board and is a non-profit. Their website, <https://elywinterfestival.com/>, contains a listing of events sponsored by local businesses or the Ely Winter Festival.

The Ely Winter Festival is responsible for administering this plan for the snow sculptures, which consists of the creation of five snow sculptures in Ely. Stay Safe Protocol will be detailed in this plan for activities that the EWF is sponsoring. Local business or non-profits providing services are responsible for their own COVID Preparedness Plan and expected to follow Stay Safe Protocol.

In an effort to mitigate the risk of COVID exposure, the Ely Winter Festival has reduced the number of snow sculptures to five and will not market any indoor events by local businesses. The snow sculptures will be positioned parallel to Sheridan Street to allow street side viewing from vehicles. Visitors who wish to walk and view will be reminded of Stay Safe Guidelines that will be posted.

The Ely Winter Festival plan follows Gov. Tim Walz's executive orders and the industry guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, available at the Stay Safe Minnesota website (<https://staysafe.mn.gov>). The Ely Winter Festival has reviewed and incorporated the Stay Safe guidance for organized sports, entertainment events, and outdoor recreation entities.

The following Stay Safe Guidelines and additional EWF guidelines will be followed by volunteer and sculptor teams:

- Volunteers and sculptors who are not in a household unit will maintain a distance of 6'.
- Masks will be worn.
- Masks will be a minimum of two layers. Fleece, bandana and single layer buffs are not considered masks.
- Volunteers and sculptors will be informed that while there is low risk associated with outdoor activities, limiting the duration of any work within the proximity of 6'wearing masks is a good risk mitigation strategy.
- Volunteers and sculptors will agree to stay home if experiencing any COVID-related symptoms or have received a positive test in the last 10 days, or have not been released from isolation.
- Group size for the sculpting teams will be limited to 5 and consist of three household units or less.

- The carving blocks will be roped off during the carving period to physically separate sculptors and viewers.

The following reminders will be posted in Whiteside Park at the Snow Sculpture Exhibit:

- Maintain a social distance of 6' between household units.
- Group size maximum of 15 and limited to three household units.

This guidance will be updated and reviewed prior to the start of the festival.

1. Snow Sculpture Management

- The number of sculptures has been reduced from sixteen blocks to five blocks in Whiteside Park. Minimizing the snow blocks for viewing and the elimination of amateur blocks will reduce congestion, streamline traffic flow and allow for more physical distancing in the creation and viewing of the sculptures.
- Viewing of the sculptures will be livestreamed to further reduce congestion and also allow for at-home participation in the festival.
- The sculptors will be five teams of local artists.
- The set-up and take-down of the carving blocks will be done by a local group of four to five volunteers. These volunteers will be hand-selected. Wade Pharr will be the coordinator.
- Volunteers and sculptors will be required to follow MN Stay Safe Guidelines.
- Signs with the current state mandate for outside group size and restrictions on number of household units will be posted in the park with the Ely Winter Festival logo
- All volunteers and sculptors will be informed of the Stay Safe requirement and COVID risk management requirements for participation.

2. Events sponsored by local business will be listed on the [EWF events page](#).

- All businesses and non-profits will submit a COVID Preparedness Plan to EWF and to follow Stay Safe MN Guidelines to offer events on the EWF website.
- No indoor activities will be listed on the EWF website and outside events will be encouraged.

3. Sale of Ely Winter Festival merchandise will be available at four local businesses, which are currently operating under MN Business Stay Safe guidelines.