



2015 POLAR PLUNGE

# TEAM CAPTAIN TOOL KIT

*Minnesota Nice meets Minnesotan Ice*

PLUNGEMN.ORG



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## 2015 POLAR PLUNGE TEAM CAPTIAN TOOL KIT

**Party like it's 32 degrees.** You may have heard about the Polar Plunge from a friend, seen it on TV or even read about it online, but what exactly is this “Plunge” everyone is talking about?

So you're saying you've never jumped into frigid Minnesota waters in the middle of the winter? Well, we can help change that!

Each year, the Polar Plunge challenges thousands of brave jumpers at numerous locations around the state. It's a great way for everyone—individuals, organizations and businesses—to get involved in supporting Special Olympics Minnesota. All funds raised go towards programming and events for more than 8,000 athletes statewide.

Think you have what it takes? The concept is simple: participants raise a minimum of \$75 and take a dip into one of Minnesota's frozen lakes. But the Plunges are so much more than that: They're the kind of fun and thrilling events that you really have to experience to understand. Grab some friends, get pumped and register today!

Polar Plungers can follow this example by bravely taking a chilly dip! Visit **PlungeMN.org** for more information. You can also contact **plunge@somn.org** or **800.783.7732, ext. 280**.

### 2015 POLAR PLUNGES

Owatonna ( <i>NEW</i> )	January 31	Prior Lake	February 21
White Bear Lake	January 31	Anoka County	February 28
Willmar/Spicer	January 31	South Metro	February 28
Maple Grove	February 7	Alexandria	March 1
St. Peter	February 7	Minneapolis	March 6-7
Sauk Centre ( <i>NEW</i> )	February 7	Brainerd	March 7
Rochester	February 14	Eden Prairie	March 14
St. Cloud	February 14	Mille Lacs	March 14
Woodbury ( <i>NEW</i> )	February 14	Grand Rapids	March 21
Duluth	February 21	Warroad ( <i>NEW</i> )	March 21

## WHO CAN JOIN MY TEAM?

Anyone with a little guts and a warm heart wanting to support Special Olympics Minnesota's 8,000 athletes is welcome to take the Plunge. In past years, Plungers have included 5-year-olds, 80-year-olds, mayors, police chiefs, sheriffs, deputies, corporations, organizations, clubs, fraternities, families, co-workers and everyone in between. In 2014, more than 15,500 people took the Plunge for Special Olympics Minnesota. That's a lot of frigid splashes! And for the more hesitant souls, there's always a need for Plunge cheer teams!

## TEAM CAPTAIN TIPS

You are the team leader and it is your job to rally your Plungers to be freezin' for a reason. The following information will help you recruit your team. There are additional resources available at PlungeMN.org. Below are a few tips to help you get started.

- Recruit friends, family members and business associates to join your Polar Plunge team. The bigger the team, the more pledges raised!
- Create your Plunge team online at PlungeMN.org.
- Take advantage of online fundraising tools. You'll find resources to help you start your own team web page, personal web page and send emails to begin collecting dollars.
- Encourage team members to register online, join your team and create their own personal web pages.
- Set your fundraising goals and encourage your team members to surpass them! Your team must raise an average of \$75 per team member to participate. Don't forget to track both your online and offline donations.
- Send your team updates through the Plunge email system. Keep your team members
- informed of progress toward your goals and offer fundraising tips.
- Plan a team-building event and invite plenty of attendees. Food is always a great motivator! Show pictures and share Plunge stories to show team members how much fun taking the Plunge really is!
- Create a friendly rivalry with another Plunge team. Challenge the team to see who can raise the most dollars, and place a friendly bet!
- Plan and create a Plunge costume to help build team spirit!
- Ask for help! Special Olympics Minnesota is here to give you ideas. We're also here to send you brochures, posters and icons for the Plunge.
- Be sure to provide day-of Plunge information for your team members.
- Remember: shoes, towels and fun are required!

Contact **[plunge@somn.org](mailto:plunge@somn.org)** or 800.783.7732, ext. 280 for more information.

## PLUNGE TEAM BUILDING 101

TIMELINE	WHAT TO DO
<b>2-4 months before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Register your team at PlungeMN.org.</li> <li>• Set team goals and create a plan to achieve them.</li> <li>• Recruit team members.</li> </ul>
<b>2-3 months before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a team kick-off party.</li> <li>• Continue recruiting team members.</li> <li>• Begin collecting donations - it's never too early to start.</li> </ul>
<b>1-2 months before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a team fundraiser.</li> <li>• Make sure your team members are registered online.</li> <li>• Start planning your team's costumes.</li> <li>• Attend a Plunge info session, if you have questions.</li> </ul>
<b>1-2 weeks before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure you have the most current pre-registration and day of registration Plunge details from PlungeMN.org and communicate them to your team.</li> <li>• Set a time and place for your team to meet on the day of the Plunge.</li> </ul>
<b>Day of Plunge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet your Plunge team at the planned location.</li> <li>• Ensure each team member registers, turns in pledges and collects incentives.</li> <li>• Take a team photo.</li> <li>• Hold your breath, Plunge into the icy water and have fun!</li> </ul>
<b>After the Plunge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect any late pledges and mail them to Special Olympics Minnesota.</li> <li>• Thank team members for their efforts!</li> <li>• Host a wrap up party to recognize your team members.</li> <li>• Send us your Plunge photos, videos and stories.</li> <li>• Take the plunge survey and help us improve future Plunges.</li> <li>• Start planning for next year!</li> </ul>

## HOW TO RAISE \$200 IN SEVEN DAYS

DAY	WHO TO ASK	TOTAL PER DAY	GRAND TOTAL
<b>1</b>	Ask three friends for a \$10 donation.	\$30	\$30
<b>2</b>	Ask three family members for a \$10 pledge.	\$30	\$60
<b>3</b>	Ask three extended family members for \$10 each.	\$30	\$90
<b>4</b>	Ask two neighbors for \$10 each.	\$20	\$110
<b>5</b>	Ask two restaurants, coffee shops or hang-out spots to sponsor you for \$25 each.	\$50	\$160
<b>6</b>	Ask your significant other for \$20.	\$20	\$180
<b>7</b>	Make a personal donation of \$20.	\$20	\$200



## PLUNGE TOOLS



### Table Tents

The table tents have proved very successful for companies involved. Table tents only take up about six inches and can be easily wiped off. Display them on cafeteria tables, reception areas, offices, break rooms and anywhere else you can think of! Special Olympics Minnesota will supply these to your team at no cost. This tool is an effective way to spread the word about your company's involvement and a great cause!



### Fundraising Icons

The icons are 3 inch by 5 inch cards with the Polar Plunge logo. Icons can be sold for one dollar (or more) and the funds can be used toward your Plunge team's pledges. When sold, people can write their names on them and you can display them in the office. Creativity counts when selling icons! You can also showcase who in the office is taking part in the event and hang their icon on their office door or cubicle entrance. Special Olympics Minnesota will supply icons to your team at no cost.



### Customizable Posters

The customizable posters are 8.5 inches by 11 inches and can be customized for your company. They are great for displaying in public areas so that people can easily grab the information they need to know to register to join your team. There are also posters that can be posted on doors and walls to display why you are freezin' for a reason. These can be received from Special Olympics Minnesota or downloaded at PlungeMN.org.



### Plunge Posters

The Plunge Posters come in three different sizes; 8.5 inches by 11 inches, 11 inches by 17 inches and 24 inches by 36 inches. These posters are great for displaying in public areas to bring awareness of the Polar Plunges. These can be received from Special Olympics Minnesota. The two smaller sized posters can be downloaded at PlungeMN.org.

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### Plunge Email Icon

The Plunge Email Icon is a photo that can be included in your email signature. Not only does it promote the Plunge, but also can hyper link to [PlungeMN.org](http://PlungeMN.org) or even your team page. Put this in your email to bring awareness to your plight! This can be downloaded at [PlungeMN.org](http://PlungeMN.org)



### Plunge Website

For 2015, we have a whole new [PlungeMN.org](http://PlungeMN.org) and will continue to use it as a go-to place for Plungers to get all the latest updates, new, fun facts, photos and tools. Maybe you'll be featured on the home page, and as always, we are happy to promote any upcoming Plunge fundraisers that you may be hosting!



## EMAIL OUTREACH

Email is an incredibly effective fundraising tool, reaching people all over the world with the click of a button. It is a great way to spread the word about your Plunge participation, and to ask others to join your team or pledge your cause.

### Tips & Tricks

- Make it personal: Tell your story. Share with others why you participate, whether it's because you are Plunging for fun or because you love Special Olympics Minnesota.
- If you've Plunged before, share a picture of your previous jump to frozen glory.
- If it's your first time, share your nerves and excitement!
- Have fun with it! Make a contest or game out of it - the first person to donate, or the largest donation gets a gift from you!
- Follow-up. Be sure to say thank you to donors after they make their donation, and again after you take the Plunge. Send them a picture of you Plunging with the results from the event.

### Sample Text:

It's gonna be frigid! This winter I will be taking the Plunge to support Special Olympics Minnesota. You might be asking yourself what this Plunge is? Well, I will be raising money so I can jump into a frozen Minnesota Lake. The Plunge into the water may be a little frigid, but I don't mind because I am supporting the amazing athletes of Special Olympics Minnesota.

To jump into the frigid waters, I have set a personal fundraising goal of \$(amount), and I need your help to reach it. I'm hoping you'll make a donation to Special Olympics Minnesota on my behalf and support my Polar Plunge. Don't you want to see me be freezin' for a reason?

You can support my Plunge several ways. The best and easiest is to visit [PlungeMN.org](http://PlungeMN.org) and pledge online. My personal page can be found at [PlungeMN.org\(personal url\)](http://PlungeMN.org(personal url)). You can check this page to see my goal, pledges raised and a photo of me after the Plunge!

If you prefer not to donate online, you can also give your donation directly to me, or mail it in to Special Olympics Minnesota at the address below. Please make sure to include my name with your donation so I receive credit for the pledge.

Special Olympics Minnesota  
100 Washington Avenue S, Suite 550  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

If you can't support my Plunge through a donation, why not consider being bold in the cold and join me in taking the Plunge? You can join my team online now! To learn more about the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Minnesota, visit [PlungeMN.org](http://PlungeMN.org).

### Email Tag

Include an email tag at the bottom of your email talking about your Plunge participation. It can be a sentence or two about the Plunge, or use the Plunge photo icon to show potential donors exactly what you'll be doing! You can even hyper link the image to your personal Plunge page. To use, visit [PlungeMN.org/tools](http://PlungeMN.org/tools), right-click the image and choose "save image as."

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook and Twitter are incredibly powerful tools for fundraising. It has become common practice for Plunge participants to do all of their fundraising entirely through social media. They are easy tools to use and a personal way to connect with friends and family all over the world with a minimal effort.

### Facebook

- Like us: [Facebook.com/PlungeMN](https://www.facebook.com/PlungeMN)
  - Share a post from [Facebook.com/PlungeMN](https://www.facebook.com/PlungeMN).
- Add a link to your online Plunge page to send people directly to your Facebook profile.
- Make your Plunge an event on Facebook. Invite friends to support your fundraising effort. That way they will have a reminder before your Plunge!
- Update your status:
  - Share why you are Plunging and what your goal is.
  - Update your fundraising progress each time you continuously until you take your Plunge.
    - Don't forget to share your "training" (i.e. how you are preparing for your jump).
- Let your pictures do the talking:
  - If you've Plunged before, post a picture of your jump along with your donation request.
  - Set your profile picture and timeline photo to a picture of you taking the Plunge, or the costume you'll be wearing to Plunge.
- Shout outs: post a shout out to your donors when they pledge! You can even tag them in your post - just type @ + their name.
- Use Hashtags: you can now use hashtags like #PlungeMN on Facebook
- Don't forget to thank your friends after your Plunge!

### Twitter

- Follow us: [Twitter.com/PlungeMN](https://twitter.com/PlungeMN)
- Retweet a tweet from PlungeMN and/or your followers
- Use the hashtag #PlungeMN to follow the chatter about the Plunge.
- Upload Photos: tweet a photo of you taking the Plunge, if you've done so before. If you're a rookie, tweet a photo of your costume. Don't forget to ask for support!
- Create an engaging 140 character message that shares why you are taking the Plunge.
- Shout outs: tweet each time you receive a new pledge. Don't forget to mention them in your status, just type @ + their name.
- Set your profile picture and twitter header image to a photo of you Plunging.
- Don't forget to thank your followers after your Plunge!

## ADDITIONAL WAYS TO FUNDRAISE

You've sent out emails to friends, called your Grandma asking for her support, and inundated your social media accounts with all things "Plunge!" You've raised the \$75 minimum, but you still want to do more. Great! There are several other great ways to get the word out about your Plunge efforts and fundraise for your cause. Most of all, have fun with it!

### Hold Your Own Fundraiser

Whether the fundraiser is for your personal efforts or a team fundraiser, it's a great way to get people together and raise funds AND awareness for the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Minnesota. Some ideas for fundraisers are below ... you can use these models and make them your own! Be sure to send any fundraisers you are hosting in to Plunge Headquarters at [plunge@somn.org](mailto:plunge@somn.org) and we will post the details to our upcoming events calendar.

- Host a bake sale at your office, in your neighborhood, or posts your items for sale on Facebook!
- Hold a garage sale with proceeds going to your Plunge team.
- Work with a local restaurant to provide a meal for customers at a set cost, with half of it going to your Plunge efforts.
- Hold a silent auction or raffle.

### Workplace Giving

- Before hitting up your coworkers for a donation, see if you can form a company team instead. It's a fun team building opportunity for companies, and wearing your company t-shirts is a great way to maximize exposure at the event too!
- Find out about matching gift policies at your company. Some companies match employee fundraising, while others match donations made by employees. This is an easy way to double your donations!
- Have your donors find out about their companies matching gift policy to see if their donation will be matched.
- To check if a company offers matching gifts, visit [www.matchinggifts.com/specialolympics/](http://www.matchinggifts.com/specialolympics/)
- Host a Casual for a Cause day at work. Employees can donate a set amount to wear jeans (or better yet, Plunge gear from previous participation) and funds raised goes to support your Plunge.
- Additional workplace fundraising ideas include:
  - Set out a candy jar and ask for change each time they take a piece; purchase bottles of water and pop at wholesale and put in the company lunchroom. Charge \$1 for drinks and any profit can go to your fundraising efforts.
  - Ask your boss if they'll get in on the fun! If your company raises X amount, they'll take the Plunge with you!