

Recreational avalanche course information

can be obtained by going to

www.avalanche.ca

Learn, and Live

If an avalanche accident happens

IT'S UP TO YOU. YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO GO FOR HELP.

Every person in your party needs to have the right rescue equipment and know how to use it. Learn more about avalanche self-rescue. Take a course or check out

www.avalanche.ca



photo: Lori Zaccaruk (Zac's Tracs)

Famous last words

"My friends will dig me out." *Maybe. But they've got to be alive and able to find you.*



photo: Dan Hudson

"I'm following tracks, so it must be okay." *First tracks may not trigger a slide, and the conditions may have changed since those tracks were made. Besides, you might be following a complete idiot!*



photo: Brad White / Aspenstock Inc.

"But, I've got my beacon on." *A beacon is not a force field—it doesn't protect you from avalanches. Beacons improve your chances of survival, but only about a third of completely buried people are found alive. They do make body recovery easier though.*

"I've ridden this slope for years." *Don't kid yourself. Slope stability changes—day to day, hour to hour.*



Photo: Snowformers

BACKCOUNTRY AVALANCHE ADVISORY

A general summary of avalanche conditions in Western Canada is produced daily throughout the winter. You'll find it in the weather pages of most daily newspapers, and on most TV and radio weather forecasts. More precise information can be found in the Public Avalanche Bulletins at www.avalanche.ca or call 1800 667 1105.

AVALANCHE CONDITIONS TRAVEL ADVICE GUIDANCE FOR AMATEUR RECREATION



GOOD

NORMAL CAUTION

Avalanches are infrequent but possible. Appropriate conditions for informed backcountry travel.



SERIOUS

EXTRA CAUTION

Avalanches will occur with human and other triggers. Avalanche training and experience are essential for safe backcountry travel.



POOR

NOT RECOMMENDED

Avalanches are occurring frequently. Inappropriate conditions for backcountry travel without extensive avalanche training and experience.



VARIABLE

EXTRA CAUTION

Conditions change from good with frozen snow to poor with melted snow. Avalanche training and experience are essential to monitor conditions for safe travel.

Users of this information assume their own risk.

Essential Equipment



Every person in your group needs to have a beacon, probe and shovel and everyone needs to take the time to practice searching.

New Equipment

Consider buying an avalanche balloon pack. If you're caught in an avalanche, triggering the airbags to inflate will help you stay on top of the sliding snow.



An international study shows this system is the most effective single device for surviving an avalanche.

photo: Brad White / Aspenstock Inc.



Avalanches and You



The Thrill...



photo: Kertis Brasa

What causes avalanches? **YOU!**

90% of recreational avalanche accidents are triggered by the people involved.



photo: Snowfarmers

What can you do? **PREPARE**

Educate Yourself

Get avalanche training.

Plan Your Trip

Select an appropriate route based on the current avalanche advisory for the area.

Know Your Group

Choose people with avalanche training and respect for mountain hazards.

Keep Your Options Open

Be willing to turn around if you or anyone in your party has concerns about the route or conditions.

Increase Your Odds

Make safe travel a habit. When possible, spread your group out in avalanche terrain and avoid stopping in areas exposed to avalanches.

Be Ready

Carry equipment for self-rescue and know how to use it. Have a plan!

Reduce your risk

KNOW THE AVALANCHE CONDITIONS

Choose your destination after checking the daily avalanche advisory in the local media outlets, reading the public avalanche bulletin at www.avalanche.ca or calling toll free 1 800 667 1105.

RECOGNIZE AVALANCHE TERRAIN

Can you identify when you and your group are at risk from an avalanche? Most avalanches start on slopes of between 30-45 degrees, but be aware that some may be large enough



photo: Don Bauer

to run out on to much flatter terrain. You may still be in danger if you're in the run out zone.

BE AWARE

Changes in snow conditions and temperature can indicate increasing avalanche hazard. Also, pay attention to what's going on above you. The weather at the ridge tops may be creating conditions far different from those in the valley bottom.

READ THE SIGNS

Recent avalanche activity, blowing snow, significant amounts of new snow (20 centimetres or more) or snow falling at a rate of more than 2 cm/hr all indicate increasing avalanche hazard.

STAY FOCUSED

Most avalanche accidents happen when the weather is good. Sunny skies and great snow can be a deadly combination. Don't let group dynamics lure you into a bad situation.

photo: Steve Kroschel



...is gone.

photo: Lori Zaccaruk (Zac's Tracs)