

Avalanche News

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

Sunday, 28.11.2010, at 08:00



Strong winds cause widespread snow transport. Avoid steep, snowdrifted slopes!

AVALANCHE DANGER

In the parts of Tyrol with the most snow, i.e. the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge from the Silvretta to the Zillertal Alps and in East Tyrol, the avalanche danger above approximately 1800 m is considerable. In remaining Tyrol, the danger above the treeline is moderate. At lower altitudes, the danger decreases incrementally to the level "low". The major peril to backcountry ski tourers and freeriders stems from freshly formed snowdrift accumulations which, due to the low temperatures, are brittle and can easily be triggered by low additional loading. These danger zones often occur in western to northern to eastern exposition and become more frequent with ascending altitude. In the typical foehn-exposed areas, they are also to be found near the treeline. With some alpine experience in assessing avalanche dangers, the perilous spots can be easily recognized and avoided. In high alpine regions, i.e. above 3000 m, in addition, in very steep, generally shady terrain, a layer of depth hoar near the ground, particularly in transition areas from shallow to deep snow, can be triggered by low additional loading.

SNOW LAYERING

Strong, in some places storm-strength southerly winds yesterday caused a great deal of snow to be transported. This was particularly evident far and wide yesterday, especially in southern regions, in the form of large sheets of air-wafted snow. Thus, the cold, loosely packed new fallen snow was blanketed over by snowdrift. The bonding of the freshly fallen snow to the snowdrift is generally poor, due to the low temperatures, raising the proneness to triggering. In high alpine regions on shady slopes, a layer of depth hoar next to the ground is also a potential bed surface for slab avalanches.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather: a low pressure front above the Gulf of Genoa is moving over the Adriatic Sea towards the Balkan states, bringing very moist air masses from the southeast to the Alps. Mountain weather today: from the Ortler over the Dolomites to the Hohe Tauern, fog and occasional light snowfall from the early morning hours. North of the Main Alpine Ridge, visibility to begin with will be acceptable. This afternoon, the snowfall will spread to the northern flank of the Alps. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 5 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 11 degrees. Strong southerly to southwesterly winds.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

Strong winds will bring about new snowdrift accumulations. Once the snowfall arrives, these pockets will become harder to recognize. The next bulletin will be published at latest on Tuesday, 30 November.

Patrick Nairz

Translated by Jeffrey McCabe