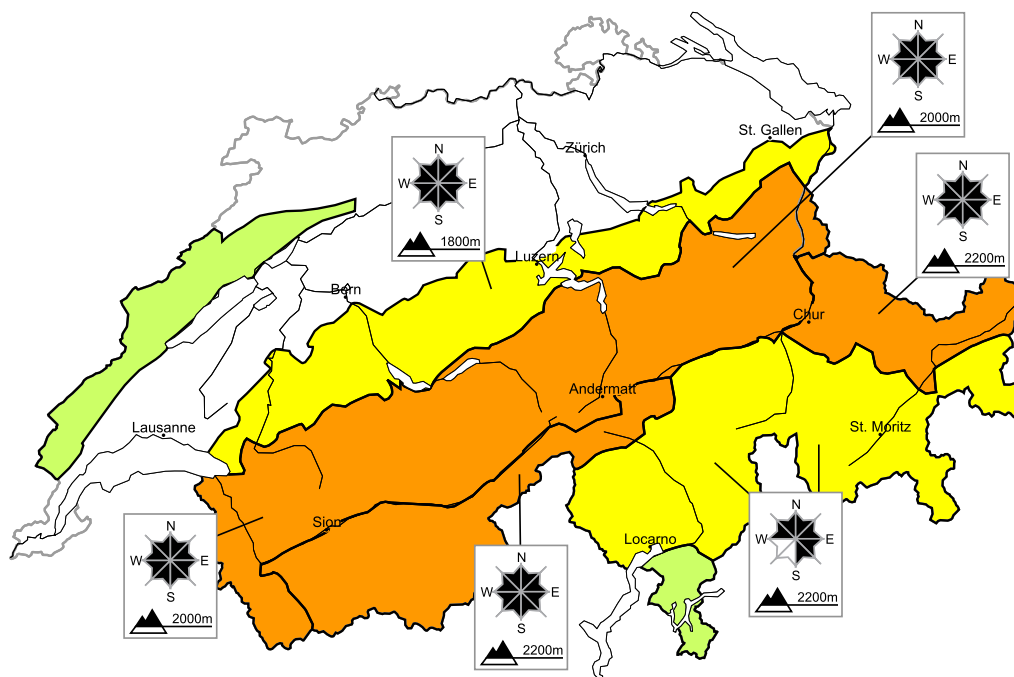


Increase in avalanche danger as a consequence of fresh snow and stormy weather

Edition: 7.12.2018, 17:00 / Next update: 8.12.2018, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 7.12.2018, 17:00



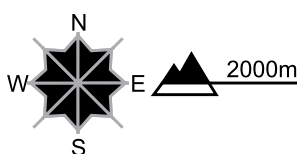
region A

Level 3, considerable



Fresh snow, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong westerly wind, large wind slabs will form. The fresh snow and wind slabs will be deposited on a weakly bonded old snowpack in particular on shady slopes above approximately 2400 m. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. These can reach large size in isolated cases. Ski touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and caution.

Danger levels

1 low

2 moderate

3 consider.

4 high

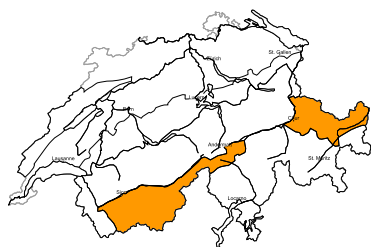
5 very high



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region B

Level 3, considerable



Old snow, wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Avalanches can to some extent be released in the old snowpack, even by a single winter sport participant, especially on steep shady slopes. The avalanche prone locations are difficult to recognise. Isolated whumpung sounds can indicate the danger.

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong westerly wind, wind slabs will form as well. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

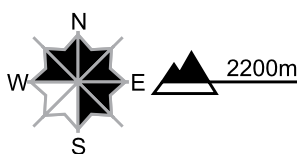
region C

Level 2, moderate



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The fresh and older wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on shady slopes. Single skiers can release avalanches in some places. Mostly these are small. In high Alpine regions avalanche prone locations are more prevalent and the danger is slightly greater. Careful route selection is recommended.

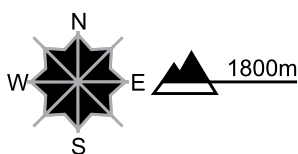
region D

Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Thus far only a little snow is lying. As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong westerly wind, wind slabs will form. These are rather small but prone to triggering. They are to be evaluated with care and prudence in steep terrain. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised as well in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

region E

Level 1, low



From a snow sport perspective, in most cases insufficient snow is lying. Isolated avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extreme terrain at elevated altitudes. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised in particular in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

region F

Level 1, low



In the Jura region thus far only a little snow is lying. Isolated avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extreme terrain at elevated altitudes. Apart from the danger of being buried, restraint should be exercised in particular in view of the danger of avalanches sweeping people along and giving rise to falls.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 7.12.2018, 17:00

Snowpack

Below approximately 2000 m there is still very little snow on the ground. Above that altitude, there is lots of snow on the Main Alpine Ridge from the Matterhorn into the Bernina region and southwards therefrom. The more deeply embedded layers inside the snow cover are well consolidated and stable in those regions, so that the dangers tend to stem from the layers of the snowpack closer to the upper surface. In all the other regions of Switzerland, even above approximately 2000 m there is still only a small amount of snow. Above approximately 2200 to 2400 m, this thin snowpack contains softened layers of snow consisting of faceted (expansively metamorphosed) snow crystals, predominantly on west-facing and east-facing slopes, but more than anywhere else on north-facing slopes in particular. In these places, the snow base is in a weakened state prior to the heavy snowfall which is forecasted. In the Jura region, the snow will be deposited on bare ground.

Observed weather on Friday, 07.12.2018

On Friday, skies in the northern and eastern regions were still overcast to start with. In the other regions of Switzerland it was generally sunny and mild.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between +6 °C in northern regions and +3 degrees in southern regions.

Wind

Winds were blowing at light to moderate strength, at strong velocity for a brief spell in the exposed terrain of the northern flank of the Alps, from westerly directions.

Weather forecast through Saturday, 08.12.2018

As a consequence of storm-strength westerly winds, an active cold front is expected to cross over the northern flank of the Alps on Friday evening. On Saturday as well, skies will be heavily overcast, accompanied by precipitation. The snowfall level will swiftly descend from 1600 m down to approximately 1000 m. In the furthestmost southern regions it is expected to be quite sunny as a result of strong to storm-strength northwesterly winds.

Fresh snow

By Saturday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow are expected above approximately 1800 m:

- northern Alpine Ridge and furthestmost western part of Lower Valais: 20 to 40 cm, more from place to place;
- remaining regions of Switzerland: 10 to 25 cm over widespread areas; less on the southern flank of the Alps, in the southern part of Central Grisons, in the Upper Engadine and in the southern part of the Lower Engadine.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -5 °C.

Wind

Winds will be blowing at strong to storm velocity from the west, on the southern flank of the Alps from the northwest.

Outlook through Monday, 10.12.2018

As a consequence of the storm-strength westerly-to-northwesterly winds, precipitation is anticipated over widespread areas. In the Valais, on the northern flank of the Alps and in northern Grisons, the precipitation is expected to be very heavy, particularly on Sunday and throughout Sunday night. The snowfall level is expected to temporarily ascend to approximately 1600 to 1800 m in the northern regions on Sunday morning. Subsequently the snowfall level will descend down to low lying areas.

Avalanche danger is expected to increase significantly. Presumably on Sunday in the furthestmost western parts of the Valais and at higher altitudes of the northern Alpine Ridge, avalanche danger level 4 (high) will be reached. Subsequently, this danger level (4) can also spread to other regions along the northern flank of the Alps, in the Valais and in northern Grisons. In the course of this dynamic process, even very large-sized avalanches can be expected.

In the furthestmost southern regions, it will be partly sunny and is expected to remain dry over the course of both days as a result of storm-strength northwesterly winds. In these regions, avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly.