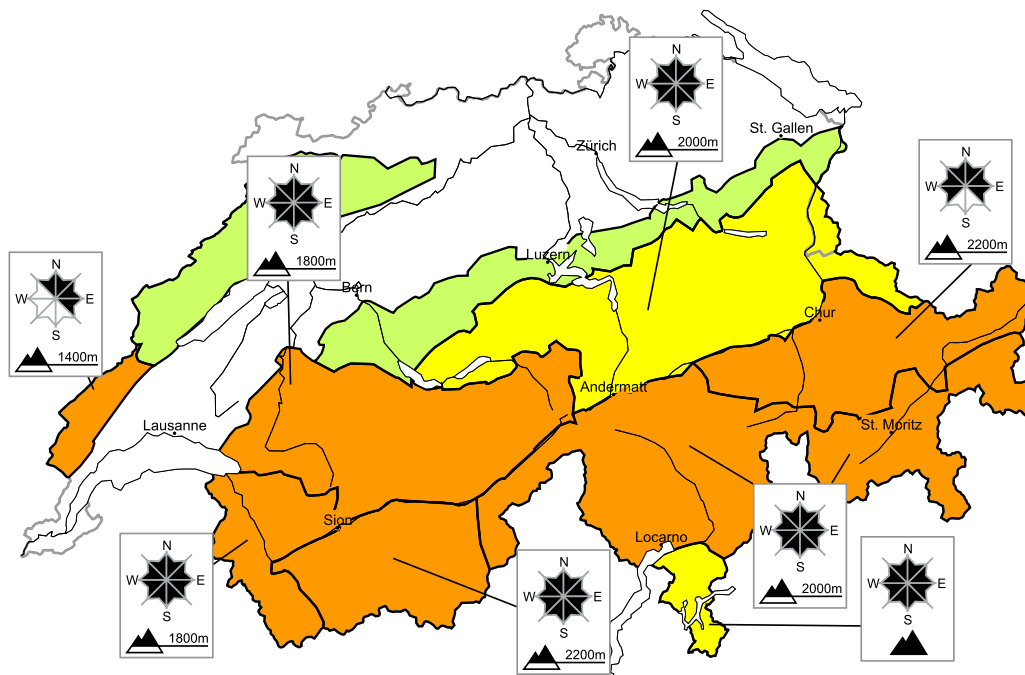


# Significant increase in avalanche danger in the west and in the north

Edition: 22.12.2019, 08:00 / Next update: 22.12.2019, 17:00

## Avalanche danger

updated on 22.12.2019, 08:00



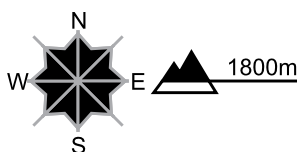
region A

Level 3, considerable



### New snow

#### Avalanche prone locations



#### Danger description

Significant increase in avalanche danger as a consequence of fresh snow and wind. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant and reach large size. An increasing number of natural avalanches are to be expected in the afternoon. Backcountry touring calls for extensive 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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www.slf.ch

**region B**

**Level 3, considerable**



**Old snow, new snow**

**Avalanche prone locations**



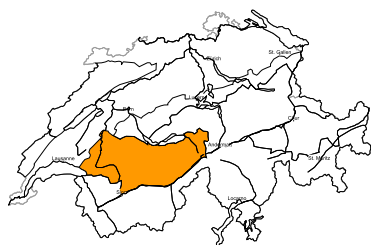
**Danger description**

Increase in avalanche danger as a consequence of fresh snow and wind. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant. Isolated medium-sized to large natural avalanches are possible in the afternoon. In some places avalanches can release the weakly bonded old snow as well.

Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

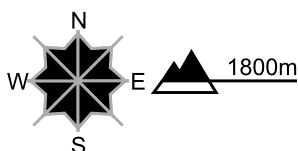
**region C**

**Level 3, considerable**



**New snow**

**Avalanche prone locations**



**Danger description**

Increase in avalanche danger as a consequence of fresh snow and wind. Avalanches can be released by a single winter sport participant. These can reach medium size. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase as the day progresses.

Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

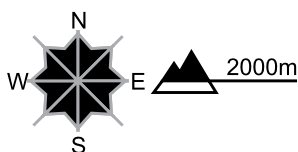
**region D**

**Level 3, considerable**



**New snow and wind slabs**

**Avalanche prone locations**



**Danger description**

The fresh snow of the last few days is in some cases still prone to triggering. As a consequence of a strong northerly wind, sometimes avalanche prone wind slabs will form as the day progresses as well. Avalanches can in isolated cases reach large size.

Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

**Gliding avalanches**

Below approximately 2200 m more small and medium-sized gliding avalanches are possible. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

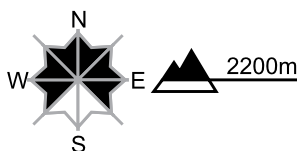
**region E**

**Level 3, considerable**



**Old snow**

**Avalanche prone locations**

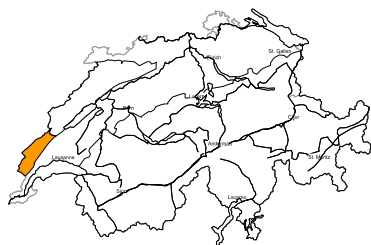


**Danger description**

Avalanches can be released in the weakly bonded old snow by a single winter sport participant. In some places these can release the entire snowpack and reach a dangerous size. In the last few days small wind slabs formed in some localities. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence in particular in very steep terrain. Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

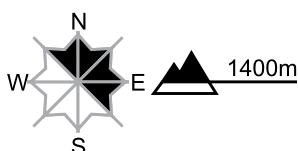
**region F**

**Level 3, considerable**



**Wind slabs**

**Avalanche prone locations**



**Danger description**

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong to storm force wind, wind slabs will form. These are to be avoided especially in very 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. Backcountry snowshoe touring also calls for meticulous route selection.

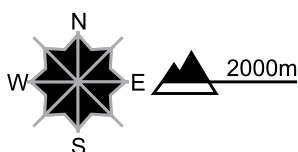
**region G**

**Level 2, moderate**



**Wind slabs**

**Avalanche prone locations**



**Danger description**

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong westerly wind, avalanche prone wind slabs will form. These are to be evaluated with care and prudence. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase as the day progresses. In the afternoon danger level 3 (considerable) will be reached.

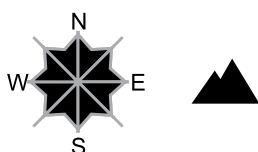
**region H**

**Level 2, moderate**



**Wet avalanches**

**Avalanche prone locations**

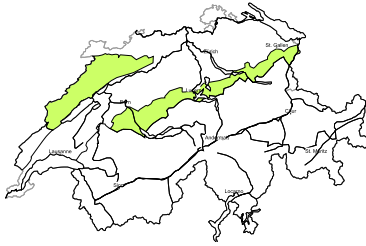


**Danger description**

Only a little snow is lying. More small and, in isolated cases, medium-sized wet avalanches are possible.

**region I**

**Level 1, low**



**Wind slabs**

Thus far only a little snow is lying.

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong wind, wind slabs will form adjacent to ridgelines. The number and size of avalanche prone locations will increase as the day progresses. These are to be avoided in terrain where there is a danger of falling.

## Snowpack and weather

updated on 21.12.2019, 17:00

### Snowpack

The new snow and freshly-generated snowdrifts in the western and the northern regions are being deposited on top of a snowpack surface bearing marked impact from recent winds. At intermediate altitudes the snowpack was moist. In the southern regions the thick layers of new snow and snowdrift accumulations of recent days have consolidated to an increasing extent. As a result of the strong-velocity northerly winds, fresh, in some places trigger-sensitive snowdrift accumulations are being generated during the course of the day.

More deeply embedded inside the snowpack, there are expansively metamorphosed (faceted) and loosely-packed layers of snow crystals evident in the northern regions, in the Valais and in Grisons more than anywhere else. The old-snow problem is especially pronounced in the inneralpine regions of Switzerland.

### Observed weather on Saturday, 21.12.2019

During the nocturnal and the morning hours, there was snowfall over widespread areas, in the southeast more than anywhere else. The snowfall level descended to 1300 m in the Jura region and to 1700 m in southern Grisons. During the daytime the snowfall came to an end. In the western and the southern regions, there were some bright intervals.

#### Fresh snow

The following amounts of fresh snow were registered between Thursday morning and Saturday midday, above approximately 2200 m:

- central sector of the southern flank of the Alps: 70 to 100 cm;
- immediately bordering regions of the Main Alpine Ridge, as well as the southern Simplon region, eastern sector of the Main Alpine Ridge from Avers into the Bernina: 50 to 70 cm; further to the north, strikingly less;
- furthestmost western part of Lower Valais, remaining parts of the Upper Valais sector of the Main Alpine Ridge, remaining parts of Upper Engadine, Val Müstair: 20 to 30 cm;
- in the other regions of Switzerland, 10 to 20 cm over widespread areas;

Western part of Jura region above 1400 m: 10 to 20 cm.

#### Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -2 °C in the northern regions and 0 °C in the southern regions.

#### Wind

- Winds were blowing generally at moderate strength from westerly directions;
- in the southern regions, northerly winds were blowing at moderate strength during the afternoon.

**Weather forecast** through Sunday, 22.12.2019

During the nocturnal hours, snowfall is expected to set in from the west. During the daytime persistent snowfall is anticipated in western and in northern regions, whereas it will remain predominantly dry in the eastern regions. The snowfall level will descend from approximately 1300 down to 900 m. In the furthestmost southern regions it will be partly sunny.

**Fresh snow**

Between Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon, the following amounts of new snow are anticipated above approximately 1400 m:

- furthestmost western part of Lower Valais, Vaud Alps, Conthey-Fully: 40-60 cm; in the furthestmost western regions as much as 80 cm;
- western part of Jura region, remaining parts of Lower Valais, remaining parts of northern Alpine Ridge from Les Diablerets as far as the Reuss: 20 to 40 cm;
- remaining sectors of the northern flank of the Alps, southern parts of Upper Valais, eastern parts of the Jura region: 15 to 30 cm;
- in the other regions of Switzerland, less; in the furthestmost southern regions it will remain dry.

**Temperature**

At midday at 2000 m, -3 °C.

**Wind**

- In the northern and the western regions, as well as in general at high altitudes, strong to storm-velocity winds from westerly directions will prevail;
- during the afternoon in the southern regions, strong to storm-strength northwesterly winds.

**Outlook** through Tuesday, 24.12.2019

**Monday**

In the northern regions, snowfall will be persistent and heavy, accompanied by strong-velocity northwesterly winds. The snowfall level will be at low lying areas. In the furthestmost southern regions it will be quite sunny.

Avalanche danger levels in the northern regions will increase further. In the Lower Valais and on the northern Alpine Ridge from Les Diablerets as far as Grimsel Pass, avalanche danger level 4 (high) will presumably be reached. In the southern regions, avalanche danger levels are not expected to change significantly.

**Tuesday**

In the northern regions, snowfall is expected to persist, but the intensity will slacken off. The snowfall level will ascend to 1200 to 1800 m.

The avalanche situation in northern regions will remain critical for all backcountry activities away from secured ski runs; in the southern regions the avalanche situation is not expected to change significantly.