

Caution: fresh snow and snowdrifts in high alpine regions

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Avalanche danger

Dry-snow avalanches

The danger of dry-snow avalanches stems for the most part from the fresh snow and freshly generated snowdrifts in high alpine regions. From place to place, one sole person can trigger an avalanche.

The layers of fresh fallen snow and fresh snowdrifts are deepest in the eastern part of the Bernese Oberland, in the Urner and Glarus Alps as well as in the central sector of the southern flank of the Alps, in Avers, in Val Bregaglia and in the Bernina region. Avalanches in those regions can reach medium size. Experience in the assessment of the avalanche situation on-site, as well as a prudent route selection are necessary.

In the remaining regions of Switzerland, the avalanche accumulations which are prone to triggering are generally small to medium-sized. They need to be cautiously evaluated in very steep terrain.

The danger of dry-snow avalanches is expected to diminish on Saturday, however only very incrementally on north-facing slopes.

Wet-snow avalanches during the course of the day

The danger of wet-snow avalanches is expected to increase in the southern regions as early as Friday, subsequently in the northern regions on Saturday as a result of solar radiation. Moist loose-snow avalanches triggering from the fresh fallen snow are anticipated more than anything else.

Snow and weather

Snowpack

Prior to the snowfall there was a cohesive, area-wide snowpack above approximately 2400 m on north-facing slopes, on south-facing slopes particularly in the high alpine regions. This snow cover was thoroughly wet over widespread areas and well settled. The surface of the old snowpack was generally rough-faced, making it more favourable. On very steep north-facing and east-facing slopes in high alpine regions, the snowpack surface was less favourable, moreover the bonding between the old snow and fresh snow there is worse.

Weather review to Thursday, 4 June

Skies were overcast for the most part. In the southern regions there was frequent precipitation. In the remaining regions of Switzerland there was intermittent rainfall. During the afternoons the precipitation intensified also in the northern regions. The snowfall level lay at 2700 m. Winds were blowing intermittently at moderate strength from southerly directions. Between Wednesday afternoon and Thursday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow were registered above approximately 3200 m:

- Central sector of the southern flank of the Alps, Avers, Val Bregaglia, Bernina region: 20 to 40 cm;
- northern flank of the Alps: only a few centimetres over widespread areas, as much as 20 cm from place to place;
- in the other regions of Switzerland, it was generally dry.

Weather outlook through Saturday, 6 June

On Friday in the northern regions, frequent precipitation is anticipated. The snowfall level is expected to descend temporarily to 1800 m, subsequently ascend to 2200 m again by evening. In the southern regions, the precipitation will come to an end in the course of Thursday night. During the daytime on Friday it will be quite sunny. Winds will be blowing at moderate to strong velocity from westerly directions.

On Saturday morning in the northern regions, skies will be partially overcast, in the southern regions it will be quite sunny. During the course of the day, increasingly frequent showers and thunderstorms are expected. The snowfall level will ascend to 2400 to 2800 m. In some places a strong southwesterly wind will be blowing.

Between Thursday evening and Friday evening, the following amounts of fresh snow are anticipated:

- Eastern part of the Bernese Oberland, Urner Alps, Glarus Alps: 30 to 40 cm;
- furthestmost western part of Lower Valais, remaining parts of the northern Alpine Ridge, northern Grisons, Main Alpine Ridge from Rheinwald into the Bernina region: 15 to 30 cm;
- in the remaining regions of Switzerland: less.

In the northern regions, the prognosticated amounts of fresh snow will be reached above approximately 2700 m, in the southern regions above approximately 3200 m.

Outlook

On Sunday, precipitation over widespread areas is expected, most of which will fall in the southern and the eastern regions. On Monday, intermittent precipitation is anticipated. The snowfall level in the northern regions will lie at 2000 m, in the southern regions at 2400 m.

As a result of the fresh fallen snow, the danger of dry-snow avalanches will again increase in the high alpine regions more than anywhere else, in particular on the southern flank of the Alps and in Grisons.

Keep informed about the publication of unannounced Avalanche Bulletins. Activate in the App WhiteRisk the "Push Summer Bulletin". You can also subscribe to the SMS Service by sending an SMS "START SLF SOMMER" to Nr. 9234 (only Swiss cell phone providers) or unsubscribe by sending an SMS "STOP SLF SOMMER" (CHF 0.2/SMS).