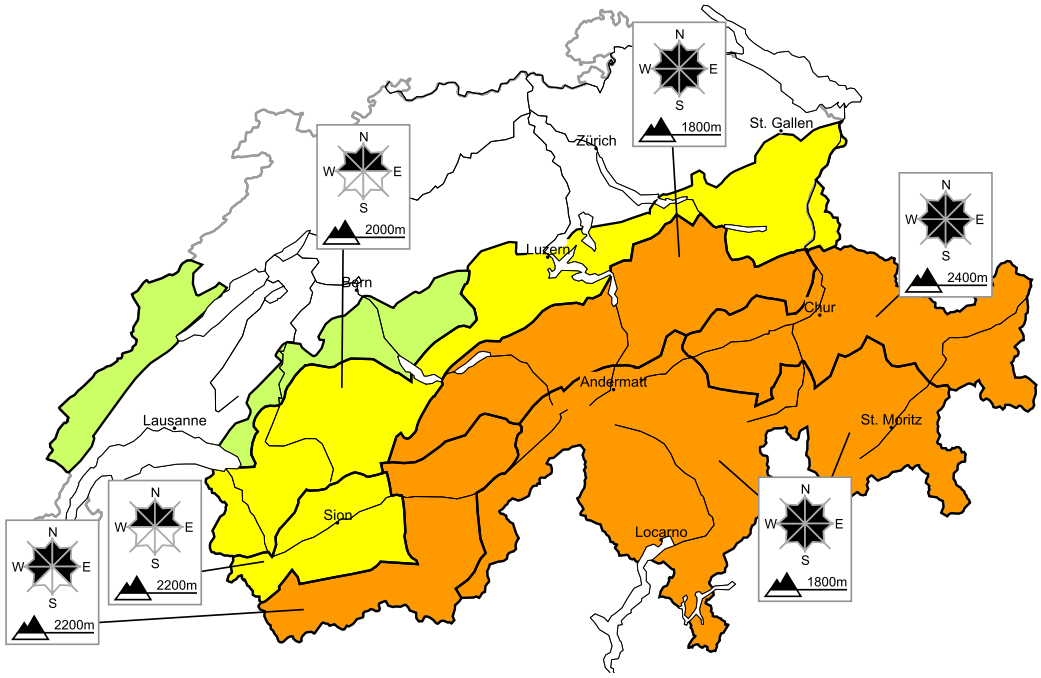
Considerable avalanche danger will be encountered over a wide area

Edition: 9.12.2020, 17:00 / Next update: 10.12.2020, 17:00

Avalanche danger

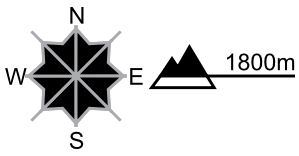
updated on 9.12.2020, 17:00



region A — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of a moderate to strong northerly wind, avalanche prone wind slabs formed on Wednesday over a wide area. These are to be avoided. The wind slabs of Tuesday are covered with new snow in some cases and therefore difficult to recognise. These have formed in particular in the regions of the north exposed to the foehn wind.
The conditions are precarious for ski touring, freeriding and snowshoe hiking outside marked and open pistes.

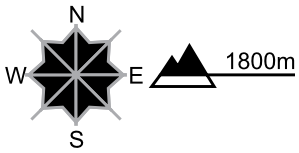
Gliding avalanches

On steep grassy slopes more gliding avalanches are possible, even large ones. This applies in particular below approximately 2200 m. Areas with glide cracks are to be avoided as far as possible.

region B — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The new snow and wind slabs of the last few days are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack on shady slopes. As a consequence of northerly wind, further wind slabs formed in particular adjacent to ridgelines. Single winter sport participants can release avalanches. These can penetrate deep layers and reach dangerously large size in particular on steep north facing slopes.
Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

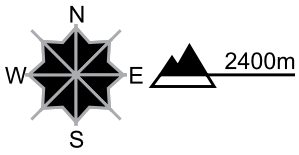
Gliding avalanches

On steep grassy slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible, but they will be mostly small. This applies in particular below approximately 2200 m.

region C — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs, old snow

Avalanche prone locations



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Gliding avalanches

On steep grassy slopes individual gliding avalanches are possible, but they will be mostly small. This applies in particular below approximately 2200 m.

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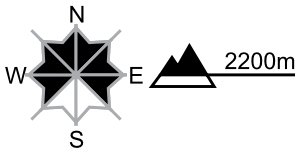
region D — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

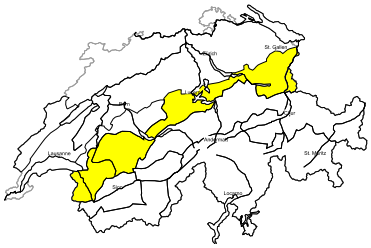
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

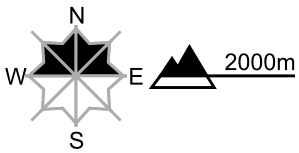
Fresh and somewhat older wind slabs can be released by a single winter sport participant. Mostly they are rather small. Avalanches can to some extent be released in deeper layers also. This applies in particular on wind-protected shady slopes at elevated altitudes. Avalanches can reach medium size in isolated cases.
Backcountry touring and other off-piste activities call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region E — Level 2, moderate



Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



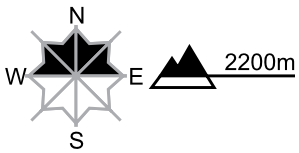
Danger description

Thus far only a little snow is lying. Somewhat older wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on shady slopes at elevated altitudes. They are covered with new snow and therefore difficult to recognise. They can in some cases be released by a single winter sport participant. Mostly the avalanches are small.
Careful route selection is important.

region F — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Thus far only a little snow is lying. Somewhat older wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on shady slopes at elevated altitudes. They are in some cases prone to triggering. Avalanches can in isolated cases be released by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases.
Careful route selection is important. 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.

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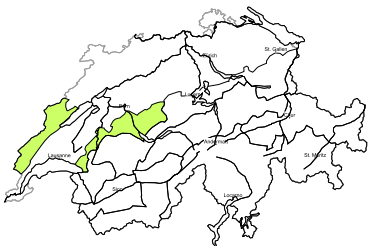
region G

Level 1, low



No distinct avalanche problem

From a snow sport perspective, in most cases insufficient snow is lying. Individual avalanche prone locations are to be found in particular in extremely steep terrain. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

Snowpack and weather

updated on 9.12.2020, 17:00

Snowpack

As a result of northerly winds, loosely-packed, near-to-surface snow has been transported in the southern regions more than anywhere else. Freshly generated and somewhat older snowdrift accumulations have been blanketed over with fresh snow in places, making them difficult to recognize. The fresh snow and snowdrifts from last weekend have consolidated well for the most part in those regions where precipitation was heaviest. Particularly on north-facing slopes, the snow in all regions was deposited on top of an unfavourable snowpack base which contains soft layers of expansively metamorphosed (faceted) crystals in some places. In the central and eastern sectors of the northern flank of the Alps this applies to altitudes above approximately 1500 m, whereas in the remaining regions of Switzerland it applies to altitudes above 2000 to 2400 m. In the regions of the west and north more than anywhere else, as well as in general the regions where there is not much snow, avalanches can be released in these more deeply embedded layers by persons. On south-facing slopes, smaller amounts of old snow are evident, these are generally well consolidated. The old-snow problem is less pronounced in those zones.

Observed weather on Wednesday, 09.12.2020

Skies were heavily overcast and there was intermittent snowfall down to low lying areas.

Fresh snow

Between Tuesdasy evening and Wednesday afternoon, the following amounts of fresh snow were registered:

- Chablais, northern flank of the Alps east of the Aare, Grisons, Ticino: 10 to 15 cm;
- in the other regions of Switzerland, only a few centimetres.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, -7 °C in the northern regions and -4 °C in the southern regions.

Wind

Winds were blowing from northerly directions at light to moderate strength, blowing at moderate to strong velocity on the Main Alpine Ridge and southwards therefrom.

Weather forecast through Thursday, 10.12.2020

On Wednesday night, the snowfall will come to a close. In the early morning hours on Thursday in the northern regions, it will be predominantly sunny in the mountains. In the southern regions it is expected to be only partly sunny.

Fresh snow

The snowfall level will be below 1000 m. On Wednesday night in the northern and the eastern regions, a few centimetres of fresh snow is anticipated.

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between -3 °C in the northern regions and -5 °C in the southern regions.

Wind

Winds during the night will be easterly, blowing at light strength; during the daytime blowing at light to moderate velocity from southerly directions.

Avalanche bulletin through Thursday, 10 December 2020

Outlook through Saturday, 12.12.2020

Friday

Skies will be heavily overcast for the most part and during the course of the morning in western and southern regions more than anywhere else, precipitation will set in. The snowfall level in northern regions will ascend to 800 to 1200 m. In the southern regions the snowfall level will remain at a lower altitude. A moderate to strong southwesterly wind will be blowing. Avalanche danger levels will increase slightly in western regions during the course of the day.

Saturday

Skies will be heavily overcast by and large and precipitation is anticipated in the western and the northern regions more than anywhere else. The snowfall level will be at approximately 1000 m. Avalanche danger levels will ascend in the western and northern regions.