Avalanche bulletin for Sunday, 19 December 2021

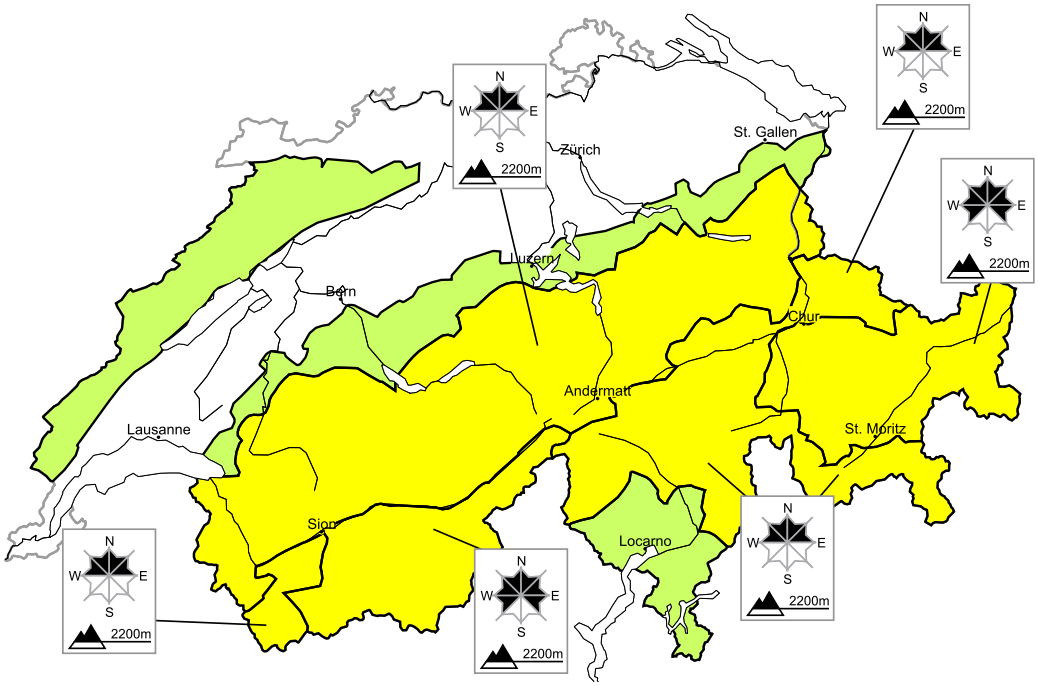
19.12.2021, 07:44

In the inneralpine regions a sometimes treacherous avalanche situation will prevail

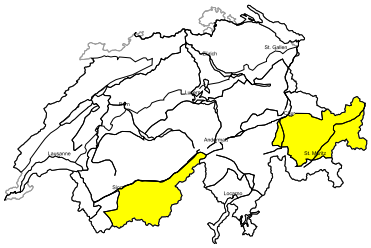
Edition: 19.12.2021, 08:00 / Next update: 19.12.2021, 17:00

Avalanche danger

updated on 19.12.2021, 08:00

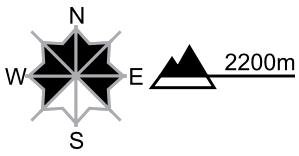


region A — Level 2, moderate



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Distinct weak layers deep in the old snowpack necessitate caution, especially on very steep shady slopes, as well as on south facing slopes above approximately 2800 m. Here avalanches can be triggered in the weakly bonded old snow and reach a dangerous size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially in little used terrain and at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack. These places are barely recognisable, even to the trained eye. Whumpfing sounds can indicate the danger.
Defensive route selection is required. Maintaining distances between individuals and one-at-a-time descents are recommended, especially on very steep shady slopes.

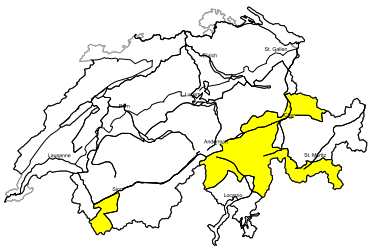
Gliding avalanches

Individual small to medium-sized gliding avalanches are possible. This applies on sunny slopes below approximately 2400 m, and on shady slopes below approximately 2000 m.

Danger levels 1 low | 2 moderate | 3 consider. | 4 high | 5 very high

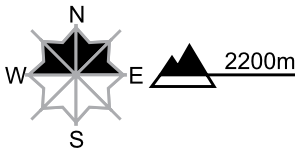
WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

region B — Level 2, moderate



Old snow

Avalanche prone locations



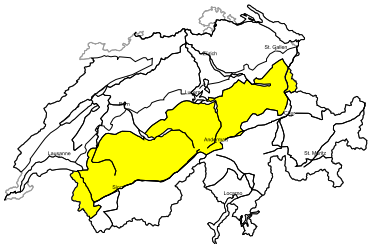
Danger description

Avalanches can in isolated cases be released in the old snowpack and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially on very steep shady slopes and on south facing slopes above approximately 2800 m. The avalanche prone locations are rare but are difficult to recognise. In addition mostly small wind slabs formed at elevated altitudes. Careful route selection is recommended.

Gliding avalanches

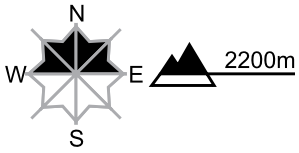
Individual small to medium-sized gliding avalanches are possible. This applies on sunny slopes below approximately 2400 m, and on shady slopes below approximately 2000 m.

region C — Level 2, moderate



Dry avalanches: no distinct avalanche problem

Avalanche prone locations



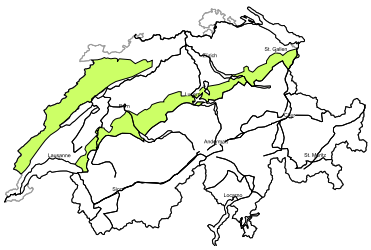
Danger description

A generally favourable avalanche situation will prevail. In very isolated cases avalanches can be released in the old snowpack and reach medium size. These avalanche prone locations are to be found especially at transitions from a shallow to a deep snowpack, when entering gullies and bowls for example. In some localities small wind slabs formed. Careful route selection is recommended.

Gliding avalanches

In starting zones where no previous releases have taken place individual medium-sized and, in isolated cases, large gliding avalanches are possible. This applies on sunny slopes below approximately 2400 m, and on shady slopes below approximately 2000 m. Gliding avalanches can be released at any time of day or night. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region D — Level 1, low

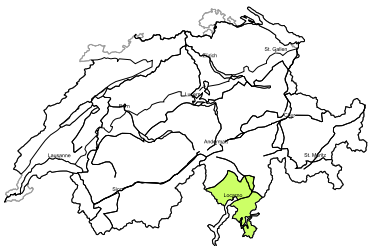


Gliding avalanches

Individual small to medium-sized gliding avalanches and wet snow slides are possible. Caution is to be exercised in areas with glide cracks.

region E

Level 1, low



No distinct avalanche problem

Only a little snow is lying. Individual avalanche prone locations for dry avalanches are to be found in particular on shady slopes above approximately 2000 m. Restraint should be exercised because avalanches can sweep people along and give rise to falls.

WSL Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research SLF
www.slf.ch

Snowpack and weather

updated on 18.12.2021, 17:00

Snowpack

In the lower part of the snowpack, particularly on west-facing, north-facing and east-facing slopes above approximately 2200 m, weak layers are evident. In western Lower Valais and on the northern flank of the Alps these ground-level layers are covered over by thick layers of fresher snow so that the likelihood of avalanches being triggered by persons is low. From central Valais over the Ticino as far as Grisons, the snowpack layering is least favourable. In those regions isolated medium-to-large sized avalanches have been triggered by persons in the last few days.
The activity of gliding avalanches continues to diminish incrementally. Nevertheless, on steep grass-covered slopes which have not yet discharged, gliding avalanches continue to be possible in isolated cases. In the western and the northern regions where recent snowfall has been heaviest, these releases can grow to large size in some places.
During a night of clear skies on Saturday, a melt-freeze crust which is capable of bearing loads will form on the snowpack surface on very steep south-facing slopes. As a consequence of daytime warming and solar radiation, the snowpack surface on steep south-facing slopes will become moist

Observed weather on Saturday, 18.12.2021

It was sunny in the mountains during the daytime, following a night of clear skies.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, +5 °C.

Wind

Intermittently moderate-to-strong velocity northerly to easterly winds were blowing at high altitudes.

Weather forecast through Sunday, 19.12.2021

Following a night of clear skies it will be sunny in the mountains during the daytime.

Fresh snow

-

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m, between +4 °C in the western and the southern regions and +1 °C in the eastern regions.

Wind

Winds in the central and eastern sectors of the Main Alpine Ridge and southwards therefrom will be northeasterly, blowing at moderate to strong velocity; in the other regions winds will be light to moderate.

Outlook through Tuesday, 21.12.2021

It will be sunny in the mountains on both days.
The danger of dry-snow avalanches is not expected to change significantly. As a result of lower temperatures, the activity of gliding avalanches will continue to diminish gradually.