

National avalanche bulletin no. 194

valid through Thursday, 02 September 2010

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Onset of winter, snowfall below 2000 m

Current conditions

Between the morning of Friday, 27 August and Saturday night, 28 August, it rained. Particularly in the eastern Prealps, the precipitation was intense. The snowfall level gradually dropped from about 4000 m to begin with down to 3000 m and, by the end of the period of precipitation, further down to about 2200 meters. In high alpine regions of the Bernese, Urner and Glarner Alps there was as much as 30 cm of snowfall, below that altitude about 10 cm. In the remaining regions there was less fresh fallen snow. A moderate to strong southwesterly to northwesterly wind was blowing.

On Sunday, 29 August, it was partly sunny along the Prealps, elsewhere it was predominantly so. A light to moderate westerly wind was blowing. The freezing level at midday lay between approximately 3000 m in southern regions, 2700 m in western regions and 2200 m in northeastern regions.

Development

On Monday, 30 August, and Tuesday, 31 August, repeated spells of precipitation are anticipated. The snowfall level will be between 1500 and 2000 m, in cases of heavy precipitation along the northern flank of the Alps even lower from place to place. On both days, a strong to storm velocity northwesterly to northerly wind is expected to be blowing. By Tuesday evening, 31 August, in the central and eastern parts of the northern flank of the Alps as well as in Prättigau, 30 to 60 cm of snowfall is expected above approximately 2000 m, locally even more. Towards the west and south, the amounts of precipitation will decrease. In far southern regions it is expected to remain dry. Detailed information on weather conditions can be heard in German in the Alpine weather report published daily by MeteoSchweiz: tel. no. 0900 162 138 (CHF 1.20 / min.) or by consulting www.meteoschweiz.ch.

Avalanche danger

On Monday, 30 August, and Tuesday, 31 August, particularly in high alpine regions of the Bernese, Urner and Glarner Alps and in the Silvretta, conditions are expected to remain wintery. The danger of avalanches will be heightened in those regions. Through the effects of interrupted bouts of precipitation and wind, a variety of snow layers will form which, to start with, will be insufficiently bonded to one another. Mountain climbers can trigger avalanches; snowdrift accumulations are particularly treacherous in this respect. Below about 3000 m, naturally triggered sluffs are possible, particularly across smooth sub-surfaces such as steep, grass-covered slopes or rock slabs and ledges. In exposed terrain, special caution should be given to the dangers of being swept along and falling. This also applies in the other regions with lesser amounts of new fallen snow.

Outlook

On Wednesday, 1 September, and Thursday, 2 September, it is expected to be predominantly sunny and it will turn significantly warmer. Through the higher temperatures, moist sluffs can be expected even in high alpine regions. The major hazard lies in the peril of being swept along and falling in exposed places. The fresh fallen snow will stabilise swiftly, thus permitting the avalanche danger to rapidly recede.

Information

The next avalanche bulletin will be published in case of heavy snowfall down to the treeline. It is essential to continue paying heed and exercising caution towards avalanche hazards, particularly in case of snowfall.

By calling tel. no. 187 (50 Rappen per call per minute) or consulting www.slf.ch additional data continues to be available from the automated stations.

If you would like to be notified via SMS when the next avalanche bulletin is published, send an SMS with the message "START SLF SOMMER" to tel. no. 9234. You can cancel the service anytime by sending the message "STOP SLF SOMMER". An SMS costs 20 Rappen.