

GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Fri Oct 18, 2013

This is Eric Knoff with early season snowpack information issued Friday, October 18th at 12:00 p.m. Today's information is sponsored by Montana Import Group in partnership with the Friends of the Avalanche Center. This information will be updated as conditions change.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

While the government was shut down, Mother Nature stayed hard at work. Over the past few weeks, a series of storms have kept the mountains unusually white for this time of year. In most mountain locations, one to two feet of snow exists above 8,000 ft.

More often than not, deep snow in October does more harm than good. The reason being, shallow-early season snowpacks are frequently exposed to strong temperature gradients, making them a weak foundation for future snows. However, if the snow keeps coming or if temperatures stay at or above average, a strong base could develop.

While it's too early to tell what the future will hold, it's important to stay focused on current conditions. Aside from the danger of impacting solid objects under the snow surface, there is the potential for human triggered avalanches. The most likely areas to find unstable snow will be on wind loaded slopes in alpine terrain. Two skiers found just this on Nyanuki in the Bridger Range last week. If the snowpack is over knee deep the slope should be considered suspect. Digging quick snowpits to determine the structure of the pack is an informative method to assess the stability of the slope.

Also, it's important to assess terrain carefully. Pay close attention to what's above and below you and consistently ask the question – what are the consequences of getting caught in a slide? It's not uncommon for even small slides to inflict serious injury by carrying victims over rocks or through trees. Hunters also need to be aware of avalanches since they often travel alone and without rescue gear.

The bottom line: Treat all backcountry outings as if it were mid-winter. This means – everyone carries gear and knows how to use it, only expose one person at a time and always watch your partner from a safe location.

Have fun and be safe out there.

EVENTS/EDUCATION

POWDERBLAST: Friday, 25 October

Tickets: <https://www.ticketriver.com/event/7811>

Montana Import Group is title sponsor of this year's 15th annual Powder Blast. **Grizzly Outfitters** and **Mystery Ranch** are the other key supporters. Join us for the best fundraiser of the year! All proceeds benefit the Friends of the Avalanche Center which supports avalanche awareness, education and information throughout southwest Montana.

Your \$30 donation gets you an unforgettable evening at the Emerson Cultural Center.

Beer and Wine from **Lone Peak Brewery**

Asian dinner by **Bountiful Table**

Music by the **Holler N' Pine**

And the best silent auction of outdoor gear in the valley!

1-Hour Avalanche Awareness Classes

HELENA, November 13, 6:30 p.m. at the Basecamp.

BOZEMAN, November 19, 6:30 p.m. at REI

BIG TIMBER, November 19, 7 p.m. at Big Timber High School

BILLINGS, November 20, 6 p.m. at Basecamp

BIG SKY, November 20, 7 p.m. at Grizzly Outfitters

Go to our [EDUCATION CALENDAR](#) for details and more courses.

Intro to Avalanches w/ Field Course, MSU; 4, 5 and 7 December

Info and registration: <https://www.ticketriver.com/event/7112>

Snowmobiler Intro to Avalanches w/ Field Course, West Yellowstone: 19 and 20 December

Info and registration: <https://www.ticketriver.com/event/7116>