

Snowmobile Trail Information Avalanche Awareness Guide

Know Before You Go

Call to obtain updated weather and avalanche information.

Awareness While Riding

Look for evidence of recent avalanches, shooting cracks in the snow or snow collapsing with a “whumpf” sound. These signs usually mean the snow is unstable. The avalanche danger is likely increasing if it is snowing, blowing or raining.

Recognizing Avalanche Terrain

Avalanches start on slopes steeper than about 30 degrees, but can be triggered from below on flatter terrain in unstable conditions.

Slopes with wind-deposited snow are often unstable. Cornices indicate a wind loaded slope.

A slope that's recently avalanched indicates unstable conditions on other slopes of a similar angle, aspect and elevation.

Safety Tips

If you ride on or beneath potential avalanche slopes, travel one at a time, even when highmarking. Don't stop in areas exposed to avalanches. If caught, try to ride out of a slide, but if this fails, make swimming motions while trying to stay on the surface. Have all members of the group carry avalanche beacons, shovels and probes; and be sure everyone knows how to

use them. If you get stuck DO NOT have a buddy ride over to help. The additional weight of another snowmobile can trigger an avalanche.

Avalanche Information can be obtained at:

Gallatin National Forest (406) 587-6981

www.mtavalanche.com

West Central Avalanche Center (406) 549-4488