

# **GNFAC Avalanche Advisory for Tue Oct 11, 2016**

Here we go!

Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center with early season avalanche information issued on Tuesday, October 11 at 7:30 a.m. Today's bulletin is sponsored by [Gallatin County Search and Rescue](#), because this early in the season we may need them. This information will be updated as conditions change.

## Mountain Weather

Last night it snowed. Searching online I'm unable to get detailed information as SNOTEL is not reporting and ski areas only have wind data. This morning I wandered out into my yard with a headlamp and measured 6" of snow on my picnic table with obvious wind drifting. I'm guessing that 12+" are in the mountains. Last night upper elevation temperatures dropped into the 20s with westerly winds of 20 mph before they swung east. Today will be cloudy with a few flurries and Wednesday and Thursday look sunny with temperatures rising into the 50s in town.

## Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

A foot of new snow with a density of around 10% (educated guess on both accounts) likely doubled the snowpack depth in the upper elevations. The attraction to get up there and slide around on your skis and boards is undeniable, but so is the avalanche potential. It is not unusual for Montana to report the nation's first avalanche, or snow related accident or death. The skiing is best where it is deepest: in wind-loaded gullies. These areas are also the most avalanche prone, especially immediately following a storm. This time of year avalanches can not only bury a person, but also break bones, twist knees and wreak havoc from exposed rocks. Here are five things to remember and digest:

1. Carry rescue gear. A beacon, shovel and probe are minimum, and if you usually carry an airbag and wear a helmet in the middle of winter, you should bring those too. The avalanches don't know it's just October.
2. Put fresh batteries in your beacon and make sure your probe and shovel still snap together smoothly. Most people, including me, throw gear in a corner at the end of a season and forget about it until the first snows.
3. The best skiing will be found where the snow is deepest, aka wind-loaded slopes. These slopes are the most susceptible to avalanche.
4. Travel one at a time in avalanche terrain. An accident involving three very experienced skiers in October 2012 illustrates this point. You can read the report here: <http://www.mtavalanche.com/accident/12/10/31>
5. Don't be the first avalanche victim of the season. You'll be famous, but for the wrong reasons.

We will update this information as conditions change. In the meantime, we need your observations, so please drop us a line at [mtavalanche@gmail.com](mailto:mtavalanche@gmail.com) if you get out.

## **POWDER BLAST**

Tickets: [www.ticketriver.com/event/21226](http://www.ticketriver.com/event/21226)

**Friday, October 21, 6:30 pm @ Emerson Cultural Center, Bozeman.**

**Grizzly Outfitters** of Big Sky is title sponsor of this year's 18th Annual Powder Blast. **Mystery Ranch, World Boards,** and **Spark R&D,** are our 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.

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