



Avalanche Awareness Doesn't End in the Backcountry *Snow Accumulation on Roofs Brings Similar Precautions and Threats*

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-January 3, 2023-As the snow continues to build up across Colorado and with Steamboat Ski Resort seeing more than 200 inches stacking up this winter, avalanche ratings from the Colorado Avalanche Information Center across the state remain high with avalanche warnings in place in many areas. However, avalanche risks don't stop in the backcountry but can run right up to your front door.

"It might not appear to present much of a risk, but roofs can hold a significant amount of snow based on our building snow load guidelines and should carry the same snow awareness and respect," commented Todd Carr, Routt County Regional Building Official. "Property owners should understand the risks and utilize proper safety precautions when dealing with snow on their roofs at all times."

Property owners or managers should also be aware of the potential threat of snow slides, snow drifting over the roof edges, and ice build-up on structures. Temperature changes like what the valley has seen recently can cause snow or ice to break-off along edges and fall to the ground or onto your walking surfaces along your building.

"Always be mindful and avoid being under roofs with large snow loads and make sure children don't play in these areas," continued Carr. "Roof awareness should remain top of mind until the last flake is gone from our buildings in spring."

Over the past five years the Steamboat Springs area typically has not seen this amount of snow or risk until March, but that is not the case this year. The Regional Building Department encourages evaluating roof conditions and taking appropriate steps to mitigate any potential risks that may exist. Risks vary depending upon building location, roof style, roof pitch, and type of roofing materials.

If snow mitigation is required, please take extra safety precautions when removing snow or ice from your roof as this process can be extremely dangerous. If the work is beyond your capability, there are local professionals that specialize in providing this service safely.

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