



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

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-March 11, 2019-As the snow continues to build up across Colorado and with Steamboat seeing more than 300 inches stacking up this winter, avalanche ratings from the Colorado Avalanche Information Center across the state moved to some of the highest levels in history this past week. However, these avalanche risks don't stop in the backcountry but can come right up to our own homes and buildings.

"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. Rain and temperature changes can cause snow or ice to break-off at the along the edges and fall to the ground or onto your walking surfaces along your building.

Over the weekend, two separate incidents occurred in the Crested Butte area where individuals clearing snow from their roof were caught in avalanches. One group of two individuals were caught in the roof slide and buried for about 20 to 30 minutes and the other incident saw the one person buried for two hours.

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.

"As spring takes a firm grasp, the area will likely experience continued snowfall with high moisture content or mixed with rain as well as fluctuating temperatures bringing a freeze/thaw cycle," continued Carr. "Roof awareness should remain top of mind until the last flake is gone from our buildings."

[-WeServeTheCity-](#)

Contact

Todd Carr, Routt County Regional Building Department, 970.870.5566 or [email](#)
Jon Snyder, Public Works Director, 970.871.8207 or [email](#)