

AVALANCHE SKILLS TRAINING – LEVEL 2

An excellent opportunity to learn with our highly experienced Level 2 Avalanche Instructors, this 4-day, 4-evening course is a technical Avalanche Safety program with an in-depth focus on advanced avalanche skills. Designed around the CAA **Avalanche Skills Training - Level 2 Course** (AST-2) curriculum, our program emphasizes hands-on development of skills and techniques to assist in decision making, route finding, terrain evaluation, snow profile interpretation and rescue techniques.

If you're serious about heading out into the backcountry for skiing, boarding or climbing, then this is the Avi-course for you!

Dates (2011/2012 season)

Classroom Sessions: January 13 & 14, 20 & 21, 2012

Field Days: January 14 & 15, 21 & 22, 2012

Cost:

\$599 + HST

- Students must supply their own lift passes to the top of Shames Mountain for all field days
- Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from field locations
- Students must supply their own personal equipment, food, and drinks (see equipment list)

Bookings and Cancellations

Call our office at (250) 615-3252 as far in advance as possible. 2 weeks is the *minimum*. A 25% deposit is required to confirm your booking. The balance is payable 2 weeks prior to the course start date.

Cancellations less than 30 days from start date forfeit any deposit paid, cancellations less than 14 days from course start date forfeit full payment.

The Advanced Avalanche course includes

- Instruction by professional Avalanche Safety educators
- Avaluator
- The Bruce Tremper book; Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain
- SVE & CAA-developed course materials
- Industry recognized AST-2 Certificate of Completion
- Use of a snow saw, rutschblock cord, and snow observation kit

Prerequisites

Previous avalanche course or equivalent training; intermediate or better skiing/'boarding ability. Touring equipment required (or snowshoes for snowboarders).

Participants should be comfortable with the Avaluator Card, avalanche theory, basic snow testing practices, performing avalanche companion rescues, use of the CAC avalanche bulletins and trip planning tool, safe backcountry travel techniques, and avalanche terrain recognition.

A great website for some refresher material is at <http://www.virtualmountains.ca/> We also recommend being quite familiar with all the pre-course reading you receive when you book and becoming intimately familiar with the CAC avalanche bulletins and online trip planning tool.

Location

The first weekend will be in Smithers consisting of an evening session on Friday from 6-10 followed by a day in the field, another evening session Saturday night, and a final day in the field on Sunday. The second weekend will be the same but based in Terrace.

AVALANCHE SKILLS TRAINING – LEVEL 2

Guides and Instructors

All Instructors on the Advanced Avalanche courses are Professional Members of the CAA (Canadian Avalanche Association) and hold Level II certification with the CAA. Additionally, SVE staff are excellent educators who are experienced in teaching these skills and conducting well run, professional courses. All SVE staff also have advanced first aid training, and many of the Instructors are also professional Guides certified through the ACMG (Association of Canadian Mountain Guides).

Itinerary and Objectives

This course is designed to enable students with a solid understanding of Avalanche Safety principles to build on their existing knowledge.

The primary focus will be on a developing and implementing a system for assessing and evaluating potential avalanche slopes in the backcountry in regards to the hazard that they present. This is not meant to be a forecasting course, nor a course that dwells on the scientific collection and recording of snowpack and weather observations. Rather, the course will emphasize the practical collection and analysis of relevant data that an average backcountry skier would be able to use as the basis for making their decisions regarding travel in avalanche terrain.

Four classroom theory sessions precede the four field days.

The following are targeted learning outcomes for the AST 2 course:

- Develop a systematic approach towards evaluating snow stability and hazard which includes collection of weather, snowpack and terrain information.
- Be able to recognize safe terrain and routes in avalanche terrain, and know methods of avoiding hazardous regions.
- Understand snow avalanche mechanics, including: correlation of weather to snowpack, layering, effects of temperatures, principles of slab failure, leading causes of instabilities and forces involved in avalanches.
- Learn methods of observing, collecting and recording information in the field through activities such as: hasty-pits; observations of avalanche activity, wind loading, snow distribution and depth; snow testing; weather observations; and, terrain assessment.
- To know how and when to perform a variety of shear tests, such as: pole test, compression test, burp, ski cutting, rutschblock; and, to know how to relate each test to the overall "picture".
- To be able to perform self-rescue procedures and protocols, including multiple transceiver searches.

Logistics and transportation

Students are responsible for their own transportation, accommodation, food and equipment as listed. We encourage students to ride share on all courses but cannot guarantee that a ride will be available. All field days will be based from Shames Mountain though we will meet in Terrace briefly prior to going to the ski hill.

Students are encouraged to stay in Terrace for the field days of this course in order to minimize driving times to/from course areas.

Due to the variability of snow and weather conditions, we cannot guarantee that the course will be held in the locations stated, or conducted in the same order as listed.