

## Inside Stevens

Saturday, January 19, 2008

### Mountain Safety

The mountains are a place we find peace and tranquility. Sometimes sunny, sometimes snowy, always fun. The fact is we all find something that brings us back, year after year. It may be powder turns, smooth corduroy, or a certain rail or jump in the park. Needless to say there is something for all of us in the mountains.

I would like to take a minute to talk about a few things pertaining to the mountains and everyone's safety. We know that the mountain environment is a dynamic and ever changing one. With this said, it is everyone's responsibility to be conscious of the environment and the conditions. I will take this opportunity to highlight a couple of things.

1. It is your responsibility to know the "Your Responsibility Code".  
<http://www.stevenspass.com/Stevens/ski-board/responsibility-code.aspx>.
2. In this code there are many things that pertain to how everyone is expected to use the resort.
3. In our always-changing environment there are hazards and obstacles.
4. In deep snow conditions it is advisable that you ski or ride with a friend and have a plan. IE: Stay in voice contact at all times.
5. When using the backcountry it is advisable that you know what you are doing and where you are going. That you have all the appropriate gear (beacon, probe and shovel), avalanche and terrain knowledge, a partner and a plan if you get separated. Also, practice tree well safety – these types of accidents can happen anywhere and can be life threatening.  
<http://www.stevenspass.com/Stevens/ski-board/z-treewell-deepsnow.aspx>.
6. In hard snow conditions it is advisable that you stay in control and understand the snow is fast and hard to stop on. It can also be hard on your body when you fall.
7. When using the park practice Smart Style -  
<http://www.stevenspass.com/Stevens/ski-board/smart-style.aspx>.

Part of our job in the Pro Patrol is to watch for and identify potential hazards. Following are some of the most frequently used signage and markings.

1. **Bamboo and Fluorescent Tape:** across the start or alongside a run or trail, often accompanied by a sign, means the run/trail is closed. No one under any circumstances should go under this marking. An area may be closed for safety considerations or avalanche danger. Violating a closure will result in loss of ticket or pass on initial contact.
2. **Lollipop:** these markings are bamboo with an orange circle on top. These mark the areas that you must use caution. They are often found on the side of a trail where there is a steep drop off or other obstacle that is hard to see from above.
3. **Lathe:** this is a piece of wood with florescent tape tied on top that are used to mark obstacles or hazards that appear in the middle of a trail. Used most often in the early season when we have low snow cover, these can mark bare patches, rocks or other things that the snow hasn't yet covered.

Safety is of utmost importance to Stevens Pass. These are just a few things that pertain to mountain safety. It is our goal to create a safe and enjoyable place for everyone to have a fun and memorable experience.

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