



BC SEARCH AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Know Before You SNOW: North Shore partners launch winter safety campaign to reduce search and rescue impacts and strengthen B.C.'s safety culture.



North Vancouver, October 29, 2025 — BC AdventureSmart and North Shore partners are launching a season-long winter safety campaign to help locals and visitors plan smarter, travel prepared, and reduce impacts on search and rescue, while building a stronger outdoor safety culture across the North Shore.

The campaign launches ahead of the winter season and runs November through March. Together with the three local ski areas, land managers, Avalanche Canada, the local tourism organization, North Shore Rescue, local school districts, and Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) the campaign delivers simple, consistent messages across channels—from parking lots and chairlifts to social media, classrooms, and community touchpoints.

British Columbia Search and Rescue Association

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"We're aligning local voices under one campaign to help residents and visitors be safe, informed, and prepared before heading into the North Shore mountains—reducing impacts on search and rescue and strengthening B.C.'s safety culture," says Sandra Riches, Executive Director, BC AdventureSmart.

Local SAR trends (2023–2025): Most winter callouts continue to involve people on foot—**winter hiking accounts for ~74% of incidents** (74.8% → 73.3% → 74.3%). Incidents tied to **winter sports** (skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing combined) remain smaller but **rose last season** (7.8% → 6.7% → **13.5%**). These patterns reinforce the need for **clear, simple, visible safety messaging all winter long**.

"If you leave the ski resort boundaries, you're in avalanche terrain — take a course, carry proper gear, and never go alone. Every year we respond to people who duck the ropes and get hurt or worse. Be ready to survive 24 hours on your own, carry a satellite device, and prepare for what could happen. Help us help you — and hopefully, we won't see you this winter."

John Blown, North Shore Rescue

The ski areas (Grouse Mountain, Mt. Seymour, and Cypress Mountain) will amplify the Alpine Responsibility Code (ARC) and the difference between in-bounds and out-of-bounds terrain. Land managers (Metro Vancouver and BC Parks) will promote advisories, closures, and regional tips for winter travel. North Shore Rescue will reinforce winter response realities—like delays for avalanche assessment and access—and encourage realistic expectations and proper preparedness.

Supporters include **West Vancouver Schools and North Vancouver School District**, which will promote **Snow Safety Education** to help students make better decisions outdoors. **Vancouver's North Shore Tourism Association, Avalanche Canada** and **Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)** will amplify winter safety messages across their channels.

How to take part (public):

- Check more than the weather—know the terrain and current conditions.
- Follow the Alpine Responsibility Code before you gear up.
- Follow the 3Ts: Trip Plan, Train, Take the Essentials.
- Be visible (bright) for search and rescue to see you easily.

- If conditions deteriorate, turn around early.
- In-bounds safety is managed by ski-patrol, beyond the ski area boundaries is out-of-bounds, not accessible due to hazardous terrain.
- For backcountry travel accessed via designated entry points, you must be fully self-sufficient, with appropriate winter (avalanche, self-rescue) training, proper gear, strong backcountry skills, and sound decision-making abilities.

Assets & Video Links

- Snow Safety Program: <https://www.adventuresmart.ca/programs/snow-safety-education/>
- Alpine Responsibility Code graphic: <https://old.adventuresmart.ca/winter/alpinecode.htm>
- Avalanche Canada: <https://avalanche.ca/map>
- Avalanche Gear video: https://youtu.be/IVgDsOB_1M4?si=3jl7QhQw0To32q2L
- Winter B-roll:
 - Winter Stoke Video: <https://youtu.be/zEnt7k6HK-Y?si=rNBaEnrLmCuXpl3h>
 - 3 Ts video: <https://youtu.be/XrZ1RhBmqPM?si=s6OE2gAXSW3l8wdQ>
- Request AdventureSmart presentations: <https://presenter.adventuresmart.ca/request>
- BC AdventureSmart Expert Webinar Series: <https://bcsara.com/outdoor-education/events/>

About BC AdventureSmart

BC AdventureSmart, created by the British Columbia Search and Rescue Association, enhances awareness among enthusiasts to reduce the impacts on search and rescue while contributing to the safety culture in British Columbia.

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About BCSARA

Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) in British Columbia is provided solely by highly trained volunteers. On call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, these skilled professionals provide their time, dedication, and expertise at no cost to the individuals they rescue. BC SAR teams have never not responded to an activation in the 20-year history of the BCSARA organization. BCSARA is proud to represent the 3,200+ GSAR volunteers in B.C. who make up 78 teams across the province.

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How to request SAR help

All requests must go through 911 or, if using a satellite phone, through the Emergency Coordination Centre at 1-800-663-3456. Do NOT wait 24 hours to report someone overdue or missing. SAR teams can only be activated by a requesting agency such as the police or EHS. There is no charge for search and rescue in British Columbia.

To donate to support these volunteers, please visit [here](#).

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