

# Avalanche forecasts to be color coded

By Dana M. Nichols, Stockton Record

SAN ANDREAS – Avalanche season is here, and it's in color for the first time.

The snow will stay white, but avalanche forecasts in the United States this year are color coded, somewhat like the terrorism threat alerts issued by the federal Department of Homeland Security.

“In the last five to six years, we've seen different avalanche forecast centers expand the amount of information they are putting out to the public,” said Sarah Carpenter, co-chairwoman of the education committee for the American Avalanche Association and owner of a Jackson, Wyo., business that does avalanche education.

The Sierra Avalanche Center operated by the Tahoe National Forest, for example, serves mountains in Northern California.

On Monday, the avalanche forecast for Sierra regions from Bear Valley to Lake Tahoe was moderate, signaled by the yellow danger level.

The scale ranges from green, for low danger, to black at the extreme danger level. Orange is considerable danger, and red is high danger.

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