

Avalanche dogs train with flight crew

Each winter the Sierra Nevada will naturally see its share of slides and avalanches in the backcountry. Although extremely rare, big snow dumps and changing snow conditions can cause slides and avalanches within ski resort boundaries despite preventative measures. In the event there is a slide or avalanche at or near Kirkwood, patrollers are ready.



On Jan. 21, four of Kirkwood's patrollers and avalanche dogs as well as one dog and handler from El Dorado Country Search and Rescue completed their annual orientation and training with Care Flight at Kirkwood Mountain Resort. To expedite transportation, Care Flight has been working with avalanche dogs and their handlers at various ski areas and with search and rescue teams for years.

This year Care Flight worked with Kirkwood patroller Kip McCarthy to provide orientation for their avalanche dogs and handlers to ensure both dogs and people are comfortable and familiar with the flying in the helicopter.