

# Risk of deadly avalanche grows in Sierra

By Brad Branan, Sacramento Bee

The death of a 64-year-old Aptos man at Mount Rose Ski Resort this month punctuates the fact that the Sierra snow season, for the second year in a row, is starting out with dangerous avalanche conditions.

After four years of drought, last season featured similar conditions, with several avalanches reported by U.S. Forest Service officials and the death of a 23-year-old ski instructor who apparently wandered off course at Sugar Bowl Resort.

“This year has been a little more dramatic,” said Steve Reynaud, a forecaster at the Sierra Avalanche Center, noting that four “atmospheric river” storms have dumped heavy snow in the higher elevations this season.

As of Friday afternoon, the center had placed the Lake Tahoe region under a warning of “considerable” avalanche risk. The level 3 warning, in a system with 5 as the most dangerous, was in effect until Saturday morning.

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