

The Bottom Line

Warming wind slabs are the concern today as temperatures rise above the seasonable norm. If the sun comes out today south facing slopes may see temperatures rise well above the ambient air temperature, working to intensify this destabilizing snowpack problem. Watch for moist snow as a sign that the likelihood of a human triggered avalanche is increasing. At lower elevations, temperatures are forecast to reach into the 40's F creating hazards in addition to wet loose avalanches that include falling ice as frozen waterfalls crumble and detach from the rock. Avalanche danger today is **MODERATE**.

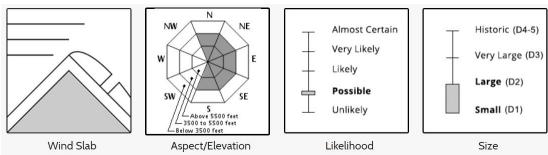
Mountain Weather

Yesterday, light afternoon snow showers produced almost 1" of snow on the Mt Washington summit while the Hermit Lake snow plot received just a trace. Wind was from the west at 50-60 mph. Temperatures climbed steadily through the day, beginning in the upper teens, and ending in the upper 20's on the summit and 33F at Hermit Lake.

Today, we start the day at 27F on the summit, and 32F at Hermit Lake. Cloudy skies may clear partially mid-day, before becoming cloudy again in the afternoon with the approaching storm system. Temperatures will climb slightly or remain steady during the day, however if skies clear enough temperatures will quickly rise to well above freezing on south aspects. A trace to 2" is possible this evening, likely beginning just after dark and continuing overnight and into tomorrow. West wind at 50-60mph will shift S and decrease to 30-45 mph. Lower elevations will likely see precipitation fall as rain late in the day.

Tomorrow, snow showers may bring 1 to 3" of new snow, colder temperatures in the teens F, and NW wind increasing 75-95 mph.

Primary Avalanche Problem



Warming today is a red flag that snowpack stability is decreasing. The possibility of a human triggering a wind slab today rises as warm temperatures work to reduce the strength of the snowpack. This will be especially true on southerly aspects if the sun comes out midday driving temperatures higher than what is forecast. Obvious signs of warming snow are rollerballs, but you can check for more subtle clues by sticking your hand in the snow and feeling for wet/moist or dry snow. Wet snow, and how deep is the clue for a destabilizing snowpack today.

Secondary Avalanche Problem – Wet Loose avalanches are possible today as the warm air and sun melt the snow surface increasing the water content in the snowpack. These avalanches will likely be small in size, though have consequence in steep terrain capable of pulling you off your feet. Elevations below 3500 feet will be the area of greatest concern, and much less likely at mid elevations.

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Please Remember: Safe travel in avalanche terrain requires training and experience. This forecast is just one of many decision making tools. You control your own risk by choosing where, when, and how you travel. Understand that the avalanche danger may change when actual weather differs from the weather forecast. For more information contact the Forest Service Snow Rangers, the AMC at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, or the caretakers at Hermit Lake Shelters or at the Harvard Cabin.