



GUIDE TO BEING A GOOD SNOWMOBILE HOST & RIDER

Snowmobile hosts are trained to provide guided safety and environment instruction to riders. Club members volunteer their time to act as snow hosts while they are out in their club's riding areas. They are trained to teach a formal Snowmobile Safety Course and responsible environmental use of the back country to children and adults as well as to teach safe and environmentally responsible riding in the field. Trained local club members can provide the direct, on the trail, contact and guided practice to snowmobile users to influence environmentally friendly and safe riding behaviors.

Snowmobile Hosts are trained to:

1. Identify unsafe riding practice
2. Identify mark and report unsafe snowmobile conditions
3. Recognize avalanche danger levels
4. Encourage safe riding habits
5. Teach safe riding habits in formal safety courses
6. Administer basic first aid
7. Initiate search and rescue when required
8. Monitor abuse of the environment
9. Inform riders of closed and restricted riding areas
10. Guide riders into areas that match their riding ability
11. Provide literature pertaining to safety and the environment
12. Build a positive image with snowmobilers and non snowmobilers
13. Be knowledgeable of commercial snowmobile use

- requirements
14. Be knowledgeable of other snowmobile use; snow boarding, ice fishing, hunting, trapping, etc.
 15. Be knowledgeable of risk management initiatives in snowmobile areas,
 16. Work cooperatively with partnering backcountry users.

NOTE:

The major differences between the Snowmobile Patrol Program and the Snowmobile Host Program are:

- The removal of the enforcement of trial pass use and the observe and report function, and a de-emphasis on the first aid and SAR capabilities that are in the Snow Patrol Program
- The addition of the responsible environment use and the hosting with a responsible guiding skills emphasis,
- An emphasis on guided practice being provided by all members of snowmobile club when they are out riding,
- An emphasis on environmental stewardship being practiced and monitored.

**ABCSC BASIC RECOMMENDED SNOWMOBILE
BACKCOUNTRY STEWARDSHIP AND
BEHAVIOUR**

BEFORE YOU GO

- Identify the areas in which you are going to ride.
- Is it Private Property or Tenured land and have you obtained permission to ride there?
- Are there Environmental or Wildlife concerns and are you aware of them?
- Have you advised anyone not going with you where you are going and when you should be expected back?
- If you are snowmobiling in unfamiliar terrain have you acquired maps of the area?
- **HAVE A PLAN!**

WHEN YOU GET THERE

- When you arrive at the staging/parking area, make certain you park your vehicle in a "user friendly" manner. There may be others using

the area, therefore keep that in mind and don't take up more room than you require.

- Don't block others in.
- If it is necessary to unhook your trailer to accommodate other users, do so.

RIDING IN THE BACKCOUNTRY

- Please observe the "Pack it in-Pack it out" rule at all times.
- If using cabins or shelters provided by others for snowmobilers, remember that this is a valuable service provided by the host in the area you are in, and treat it accordingly. Remember that others have put in a great deal of effort to provide you with this service and that you are a guest.
- Many areas promoted for Recreational Snowmobiling contain Cutblocks and Logged over areas. Please be aware that these areas have been replanted and avoid accessing them if stems are visible, as running over these stems with a Snowmobile will cause considerable damage. This also includes Skid Trails as they have been replanted as well.
- When crossing rivers or streams try to cross where bridges have been provided or where there are natural ice bridges, which you have deemed safe for use. Do not drive through streams, as this could cause Environmental damage.
- Always be aware that you may be snowmobiling in watersheds, which are being used for human consumption.
- In case of an emergency, volunteer assistance. Always carry essential emergency equipment such as a light source, shovel, and first aid kit.
- If riding in an area, which has Groomed Trails, always, buy a trail pass where required, and observe the rules of the trail. Your trail fee helps pay for the development and maintenance of the trails.
- Always carry the necessary Safety equipment required for the terrain you will be riding in. (Avalanche areas, etc.)

OTHER USERS OF THE BACKCOUNTRY

- Don't interfere with or harass others, recognizing that people judge all other winter recreationists by your actions.
- When meeting Cross Country Skiers or Snowshoers do not ride in their "set" tracks.
- Always offer a friendly greeting and ask where they are going as you can move with much more speed and ease than they can and can. This way you can leave areas for them to recreate in.

- Ask if there is anything you can do for them before you leave.
- When stopping, don't block the trail.
- Ride under control at all times -- speed can be hazardous, both to you and to other users of the trail.
- Slow down and use caution when approaching or overtaking others.
- We are in a sport which generally attracts nice people. Say hi and leave your ego in your vehicle, and don't leave your manners at home!
- No matter how much we disagree with somebody else's way, we all have something in common. We're there to appreciate the backcountry and to savor our "day in the woods."

WILDLIFE CONCERNS

- Do your best to have as little impact on wildlife as possible.
- If you are riding in authorized areas and you encounter wildlife, give them room.
Winter is a much more difficult time for wildlife as it takes most of their energy just to survive.
- If you can not safely avoid an encounter, leave the area in the least intrusive manner possible.
- Observe all applied rules and regulations concerning wildlife in the area you are riding in, and use COMMON SENSE!

"SUPPORT YOUR SPORT"

As Recreational Snowmobiling is currently facing many future changes, it has become more apparent that we must always represent ourselves as responsible users and stewards of our Recreation Areas. Always promote a friendly and positive attitude while in the backcountry, as this is what people remember.

Become informed. Become involved.

Remember,

SNOWMOBILE

T-Travel and recreate with minimum impact.

R-Respect the environment and rights of others.

A-Allow for the continued use of our resources by exhibiting good behavior.

C-Co-operate with other users.

K-Keep aware of changes and policies governing our sport.

S-Support your sport-Join an organization!

SAFE & RESPONSIBLE SNOWMOBILE OPERATION

The operation of a snowmobile is an exciting form of winter recreation, and it is also a responsibility not to be taken lightly.

There are a number of important things that must be considered while operating your snowmobile such as, required safety equipment one should carry with them, the appropriate clothing to be worn, knowledge of the area you will be riding in including, environmental and/or wildlife concerns.

The following are some basic principals to follow while snowmobiling.

You should:

- Understand the basic mechanics of your snowmobile.
- Respect the capabilities and limitations of your snowmobile
- Know how to maneuver through a variety of operating conditions.
- Know the laws governing the operation of your snowmobile.
- Always exercise good judgment and respect others and the environment.

Dress for the Weather

- As with any outdoor winter recreation, you'll need clothing that will keep you warm and dry. Bear in mind that the "wind chill factor" can lower your temperature considerably. For example, as the chart below indicates, the ambient temperature may be 30 degrees; but if you are riding at 30 miles an hour, the wind chill temperature drops to -2 degrees. Dress in layers, and wear gloves and a warm head covering under your helmet. Gloves with gauntlets will keep cold air from blowing up your sleeves.

Emergency Items [Carry the following items at a minimum]

- First aid kit
- Spark plugs
- Spare Drive belt
- Tow rope
- Flashlight
- Knife
- Duct tape

*** * * *** When riding in mountainous terrain, always wear an avalanche beacon and carry a shovel and probe. It is not recommended that the probe and shovel be carried in your snowmobile, but preferably in a backpack, in the event your snowmobile becomes buried.

ABCSC Recommended Trail Etiquette

What is Trail Etiquette?

Simply put, trail etiquette is the courteous manner in which trails should be used.

If trail etiquette has not been a priority while you are out riding, possibly you should reconsider.

The trails you ride on took a great deal of planning and work to develop and you should understand that it is a privilege to ride on them. Many are groomed at a high cost to the clubs that maintain them, and riding your snowmobile in a considerate manner will insure your continued use of the trails.

The more you treat these trails with respect, and use them in the manner for which they are intended, which is not for Racing or Snowcross, the less the cost of grooming and the better the chances for sustainability of the trail in the future.

If we use our trails in a responsible manner, respecting that others use them as well, keeping safety and etiquette in mind at all times, these trails will remain in good condition and accessible to everyone.

If you are riding trails maintained by your club, and there is no trail fee associated with this access, volunteer your time to go out with work parties to maintain the trails. **THEY DON'T MAINTAIN THEMSELVES!!**

Know the local trail rules, regulations and special concerns of the area where you are riding. Obey all closures and signs. Pass others with care and a friendly gesture. Let others know you are about to pass. Respect the rights of others, regardless of their mode, speed or skill level. Do not block the trail. Keep the trail clean. **[PACK IT IN-PACK IT OUT!!]** Slower traffic has right-of-way. Keep right, except when passing.

Always give the right of way to Groomers. Remember, in the event of an accident, **THEY WIN!!**



ENJOY SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE TRAIL RIDING

ABCSC Basic Avalanche Guidelines

Every year we lose members of our Snowmobile community to avalanches.

Unfortunately, the majority of avalanches are caused by human carelessness or inexperience and are **AVOIDABLE!!**

The majority of fatal avalanches are caused by new snow covering layers of weak or unstable snow.

The impact of an avalanche is responsible for about a quarter of the recorded deaths.

Extricating individuals from an avalanche can be a very arduous task as the snow has usually compacted as hard as concrete.

The expectancy for survival for those buried in an avalanche for more than 15 minutes is less than 50% and therefore it is very important that individuals riding in a group carry the proper equipment for recovery and are well versed in how to use that equipment.

Avoidance is the most successful tool against being caught in an avalanche and this can be accomplished by identifying the hazard before you ride in an area.

The CAA has valuable, up to date information on their website with regard to conditions in avalanche prone areas and should be viewed prior to venturing into the mountainous backcountry.

CAA WEBSITE:

<http://www.avalanche.ca/default.aspx?DN=558,3,Documents>

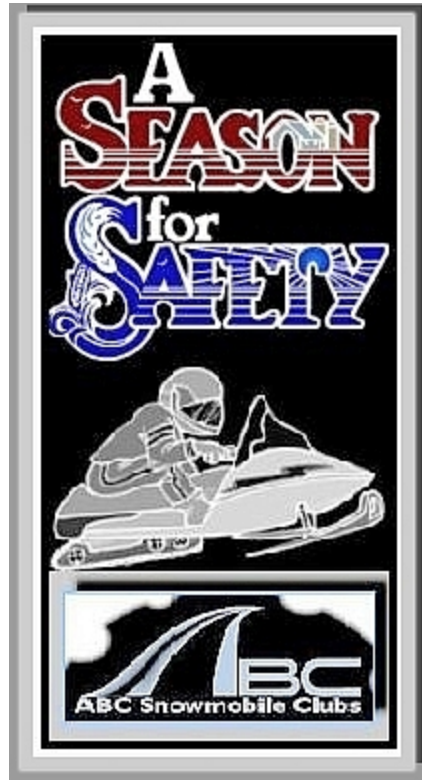
In addition to the information on the CAA site, anyone who is riding in the backcountry should take an Avalanche Safety Course.

When riding in avalanche prone areas always carry the basic safety equipment; a Probe, an Avalanche Shovel and wear an approved Beacon.

Do not carry your rescue equipment in your snowmobile as it will be inaccessible if your sled is buried!!!

Check with your local Snowmobile Association for a list of Certified Avalanche Instructors in your area and for available courses.

Let's all be safe this winter!!!!



ABCSC GUIDE TO “HIGHMARKING” SAFETY

Highmarking is the practice of climbing steep slopes with a snowmobile to attain the highest mark/location on the slope, or get over the top. It is one of the most dangerous things you can do on a snowmobile.

Highmarking accounts for more than 63 percent of the avalanche fatalities involving snowmobilers in North America. Tracks on a slope do not mean that a slope is safe. Timing is everything, so ride safely on slopes only when the snowpack is stable.

Any slope steeper than 25 degrees can avalanche. Prime slopes for avalanche conditions are generally 30 to 45 degrees, the same slopes that snowmobilers love to ride. Riders do not have to be on a steep slope to make it avalanche, you just have to be connected to it.

The following travel procedures could cut the number of avalanche fatalities in half. So if you learn nothing else about avalanche safety, remember the following about riding on steep slopes:

1. Ride onto steep slopes one at a time, with the rest of your group watching from a safe spot.
2. Do not park at the bottom of a steep slope.
3. Do not help someone who has their sled stuck on a steep slope.

If you like to highmark, adopting the following habits may help you and members of your group stay alive.

Stay alert for clues of instability, even while driving to the trailhead. Ride your sled onto small cutbanks and small slopes to test snow stability. Periodically, stop your machine, remove your helmet, walk around to get a feel for the snow, and scan the area. If the snow is unstable, you should notice one or more of the following clues:

- Recent avalanches (don't play on similar, unreleased slopes)
- New snow (the added weight can overburden buried, weak layers)

- Wind loading (wind can deposit snow ten times faster than snow falling from the sky—as a result, weak layers can quickly become overloaded)
- Rain (weakens snow quickly, causing it to stabilize when refrozen)
- “Whumphing noises” (indicates the collapse of a buried weak layer)
- Shooting cracks in the surface of the snow that run across the slope (indicates that the snow is ripe for fracturing and is beginning to slide downward)
- Hollow-sounding snow (indicates a buried weak layer of snow)
- Signs of rapid or intense warming (the snow will weaken quickly and create unstable conditions—often see small “pinwheels” or snowballs that have rolled down the slope)

Choose slopes that have been stripped by the wind (windward) versus slopes that have been loaded by the wind (leeward). Snow that is rock hard can still avalanche if it is poorly bonded to the layers of snow below it. Be wary of steep, smooth, leeward slopes.

Start out on the less steep slope angles and on the side of a slope instead of center-punching it. Do your first runs low and fast rather than maximizing your commitment and exposure by climbing as high as possible right away. If possible, do your first runs from the top down to get a feel for the snow and to improve your chances for escape. Try to turn toward the edge of the slope rather than turning toward the middle.

If unsure of the snow stability, favor slopes that have recently avalanched over those that have not yet slid. You can still ride on unstable days—just choose slopes less than 25 degrees that are not connected to anything steeper.

Unless you know the snow is stable, do not approach steep convex rollovers or aim for large rock or tree isolated in the middle of a steep slope. These are places where the snowpack is under greater stress, and as a result, you are more likely to trigger a slide. Also be suspicious of steep areas where the snow is shallow and weaker. Avoid deadly “terrain traps” such as gullies, steep-sided creek bottoms, or slopes that end in depressions because they pose a high probability of a deep burial. Do not ride on slopes with cliffs below. Favor slopes that are fan-shaped at the bottom and do not have obstacles like rocks or trees to crash into. Concave bowls are nasty traps because the fracture propagates around the slope and all the

debris collects at the bottom. This is why it is not uncommon for snowmobilers to be buried under 10 to 30 feet of debris.

Allow only one rider at a time on the slope. If a person gets stuck, do not send a second sledder to help! Roughly 33 percent of snowmobiler avalanche fatalities occur when a sled is stuck on a slope. About 34 percent involve more than one snowmobile on the slope at the time of the avalanche. It is common for a second rider to turn above the stuck person and trigger an avalanche onto the stuck rider who becomes a sitting duck below. Everyone else in the group should be watching the climber from a safe spot.

Other snowmobilers in the group should always park well away from the bottom of steep slopes. Do not count on being able to outrun a slide. Get in the habit of parking parallel rather than one behind the other. Also have your snowmobile pointed away from the potential avalanche slope and ready to start.

**The Safe, Responsible and Courteous
manner in which you operate your
Snowmobile is the example you set for
others!!**



**HAVE A GREAT SLEDDING
SEASON!**