American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education

Quick Reference: Avalanche Rescue
— DO NOT GO FOR OUTSIDE HELP —

1.) Choose/assign a leader.
2.) Assess safety of the party:
   • current location
   • risk of further avalanche.
3.) Protect party if necessary:
   • route to safety
   • avalanche guard
   • limit time of exposure during rescue
   • limit people exposed during rescue
4.) Head count. How many missing?
5.) Identify (mark if possible) last seen point.
6.) All transceivers to receive or off (PHYSICAL CHECK.)
7.) Determine the search area:
   • below last seen point
   • in areas of deposition.
8.) Prioritize search area if necessary: (if large slide and few searchers)
   • fall line below last seen point
   • in line with clues
   • in terrain traps.
9.) Establish a search pattern:
   • overlap weakest signal
   • visual overlap.
10.) Begin INITIAL SEARCH: (TAKE PROBE/SHOVEL/FIRST AID)
   • look/listen to transceiver
   • find/investigate clues and (pull out of snow, mark if possible).

11.) When you get a transceiver signal, home in on victim:
   • MOVE FAST, use
     • induction search or
     • grid search

12.) Pinpoint the signal:
   • MOVE SLOW, GET NEAR SURFACE, REDUCE VOLUME
   • grid search
   • X with equidistant fade points=pinpoint

13.) Locate victim with probe:
   • carefully
     • use logical pattern from signal pinpoint outwards
     • probe hit=location (DO NOT REMOVE PROBE).

14.) Dig:
   • consider burial depth and size of hole required
   • start downhill and away from probe
   • dig towards probe
   • GO AS FAST AND HARD AS POSSIBLE
   • change shovellers often if possible/necessary
   • be careful as you reach end of probe.

— STAY CALM —
— KEEP LOOKING —

Illustrations courtesy of ORTOVOX
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