

## Safety, Health & Fitness—

### Colorado Extreme Skiing Law Goes Back To House

A bill poised to become law in Colorado has a few more hoops to go through, according to published reports. Under House Bill 1093, cliffs and extremely steep slopes would be included on the list of the inherent risks of the sport, letting resorts off the hook for injuries people suffer while skiing them. The list already includes everything from trees and rocks to hydrants and lift towers. It also protects resorts from being sued for injuries suffered on equipment in freestyle terrain parks such as rails, half-pipes, quarter-pipes, and fun boxes, which did not exist when the ski safety act was passed in 1979.

But some legislators worried that the changes shield resorts too much and put at risk inexperienced skiers who might stumble onto extreme terrain. Under current law, resort operators are required to put up signs to warn skiers of obstacles, but once they do, those objects are no longer considered inherent risks and could be grounds for a lawsuit. That provision would be removed if the bill passes. The current system has left resorts fearful of posting signs, which is bad for skiers, said Senator Dan Grossman, a Democrat, who is also a skier and lawyer. He worked to change the bill to include a new kind of sign to warn of extreme terrain. Freestyle terrain would be designated by oval signs in orange.

The bill, which has bipartisan support in the House and Senate, faces another vote in the House because of changes made in the Senate. If the House backs the bill again it would be sent to the governor's desk for approval.

### Golden Rules of Avalanche Avoidance

#### Be prepared—

Have proper equipment— beacons for every member in the party, avalanche shovel, probe poles and a slope meter.

Only one person should cross a potential avalanche path at a time.

Have a planned escape route.

#### What to do if caught in an avalanche—

If you are about to be caught Yell “Avalanche!”

Try to get to the escape route. If that fails and you are caught, try to stay at the surface of the snow— tread water, swim and push off hard surfaces.

Try to get skis, snowboard or other equipment off. Get rid of heavy gear such as backpacks.

Try to work towards the side of the avalanche path.

#### When the avalanche slows—

Make an air pocket in front of your face.

Try to figure out which way is up by finding the lightest area around you.

Push away from the darker area and try to get a hand to the surface.

#### If you can't get out—

Try to relax and wait for rescuers.

#### If a member of your party gets caught—

Identify “last seen” area.

Check if it's safe to go into that area— if not, don't go as a group. Let one person go in with a beacon and organize a system of whistles and signals.

Turn every beacon from “transmit” to “receive.”

Delegate roles, appoint a leader. give each person a task— beacon searcher, probe pole searcher, etc.

Build a line of trajectory between clues, such as a hat, goggles, ski, etc.

Be quite, in order to hear victim's call for help.

Circle in with beacons. Once within 10 feet, use probe poles.

### Flexibility Exercises

Sources: Topper Hagerman and John Atkins, sports medicine consultants and former U.S. Ski Team trainers, Vail, Colo.; Bob Anderson, author of Stretching; Dennis Kiper, D.P.M., podiatric sports medicine specialist, Arcadia, Calif.; Steve Willard, head athletic trainer at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Arm and Shoulder Stretch

Start from a standing position. Bend your right elbow, and put your arm behind your head. Hold your right elbow with your left hand. Move the back of your head against your right arm until a mild stretch is felt in the triceps and shoulder. Then switch arms. Hold for 10 seconds on each side. This is a good way to loosen your triceps, arms and shoulders.

Chest Stretch

Interlace your fingers behind your back. Slowly turn your elbows inward while straightening your arms. Hold for 10 seconds. This stretches the shoulders, arms and chest.

Doorknob Calf Stretch

Face a door and grip the doorknob with both hands. Put the ball of your left foot against the door, keeping the left heel on the floor. Pull your chest toward the door and notice the stretch in the lower leg. Hold for 15 seconds, then switch legs.

The Towel Stretch

Sit on the floor, and place a towel under the ball of your foot. Keep your leg extended in front and your heel on the floor. Holding the towel with both hands, gently pull the towel toward you until you feel a comfortable stretch. Hold for 15 seconds, then switch legs. This stretch loosens the Achilles' tendon, heel, calf and ankle.

Seated Quad Stretch

Sit on the floor with your right leg bent, so that your thigh is on the floor and your right heel is a few inches from your right hip. Keep your left leg straight out in front of you. Lean back until you feel a stretch in your quadriceps. Hold for 15 seconds. To increase your comfort, move the tucked-in foot farther from your hip.

The Karate Lunge

Using a wide stance, bend your left leg and extend your right leg, resting on your heel with toes stretched upward. Keeping your hands up and back straight, notice the stretch on the inner right thigh. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat stretch on the left leg. This stretches the inner thighs and strengthens the quadriceps.

Standing Calf Stretch

Stand a short distance from a wall and lean on it with your forearms, head resting on hands. Bend one leg, placing that foot on the ground in front of you, and keep the other leg straight behind. Slowly move your hips forward, keeping your lower back flat. Be sure to keep the heel of the straight leg on the ground, with toes pointed straight ahead or slightly turned in. Hold for 15 to 20 seconds with each leg. This stretches your calves and helps reenergize your legs.

Seated Trunk Twist

Sit with your right leg straight. Bending your left leg, cross your left foot over and to the outside of your right knee. Pull your knee across your body toward your opposite shoulder until you feel an easy stretch on the side of the hip. Hold for 15 seconds with each leg. This slight twist is good for the upper back, lower back, hips and rib cage.

Hamstring Stretch

Lie on your back. Straighten one leg, and lift it up as close as you can to a 90-degree angle at the hip joint. Keep the lower back flat against the floor, and hold onto the back of your leg to create the stretch. Hold 15 seconds with each leg. To increase the hamstring stretch, bend slightly at the knee and pull your leg closer to your face.

Elongation Stretch

Lying on your back, extend your arms overhead and straighten out your legs. Pointing your toes and extending your fingers, reach as far as possible in opposite directions with your arms and legs, as if you are trying to gain maximum distance from your fingers to your toes. Stretch for five seconds, relax and repeat. This elongation stretch is good for the muscles of the rib cage, abdominals, spine, shoulders, arms, ankles and feet.

Leg Elevation

Elevating your legs is one of the quickest ways to rid them of fatigue and lactic acid. Lying on your back, extend your legs up a wall and let the weight of your back release down into the floor. Get as close to the wall as possible, keeping your rear on the floor and your lower back flat. (If your lower back is arched, try backing away from the wall until it is flat and fully supported on the floor). Breathe rhythmically for two to five minutes. This position will gently stretch the hamstrings and lower back, and it's a restful way to unwind after a day on the mountain.