

Avalanche Deaths in British Columbia, 2011-2022

This report summarizes all accidental avalanche deaths in B.C. reported between November 1, 2011 and April 30, 2022. Deaths were aggregated by avalanche season, with each season defined as beginning in November and ending in April of the following year.

Caveats: As the BCCS operates in a live database environment, the data are considered preliminary and subject to change. These data were compiled by date of death, which may differ from the date of injury. In some cases, the death may occur months or years after injury. These statistics may vary from those reported by other agencies because of differences in data definitions or reporting standards.

Summary:

- Between January 1, 2011 and April 30, 2022, there were 77 avalanche-related deaths in B.C., equating to an average of 7 deaths each year (*Table 1*).
- 91% were male (*Fig. 1*), and individuals aged 30 to 49 accounted for 65% of deaths (*Fig. 2*).
- The majority of avalanche-related deaths occurred in the Interior (53%) and Northern (30%) Health Authority regions (*Fig. 3*).
- Most individuals resided in B.C. (42%) or another Canadian province (40%). About 10% had a place of residence in the U.S.A. (*Fig. 4*).
- Snowmobiling was the most common activity (51%), followed by skiing (26%) and heli-skiing (8%) (*Fig. 5*).

Table 1. Avalanche Deaths by Season, 2011-2022	
Season	Total
2011-2012	10
2012-2013	5
2013-2014	9
2014-2015	5
2015-2016	14
2016-2017	4
2017-2018	4
2018-2019	8
2019-2020	5
2020-2021	9
2021-2022	4
Total	77
Average	7

Note: One death occurred in October 2012. This death was included in the 2012-2013 avalanche season.

Table 2. Number of Deaths per Avalanche, 2011-2022										
	Avalanche #									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
2011-2012	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	10
2012-2013	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	5
2013-2014	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
2014-2015	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	5
2015-2016	1	5	1	1	1	1	3	1	0	14
2016-2017	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
2017-2018	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
2018-2019	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	8
2019-2020	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
2020-2021	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	9
2021-2022	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	4

Table 3. Avalanche Deaths by Sex, 2011-2022			
Season	Male	Female	Total
2011-2012	9	1	10
2012-2013	5	0	5
2013-2014	8	1	9
2014-2015	5	0	5
2015-2016	14	0	14
2016-2017	3	1	4
2017-2018	3	1	4
2018-2019	6	2	8
2019-2020	5	0	5
2020-2021	9	0	9
2021-2022	3	1	4
Total	70	7	77

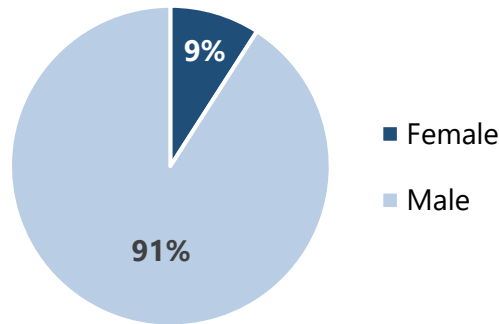


Fig. 1. Avalanche Deaths by Sex as % of Total, 2011-2022

Table 4. Avalanche Deaths by Age Group, 2011-2022						
Season	19-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	Total
2011-2012	1	5	3	1	0	10
2012-2013	1	3	0	1	0	5
2013-2014	4	3	2	0	0	9
2014-2015	1	1	1	2	0	5
2015-2016	0	5	6	2	1	14
2016-2017	1	2	0	1	0	4
2017-2018	0	2	2	0	0	4
2018-2019	2	2	2	1	1	8
2019-2020	2	2	0	1	0	5
2020-2021	1	6	2	0	0	9
2021-2022	1	1	0	1	1	4
Total	14	32	18	10	3	77

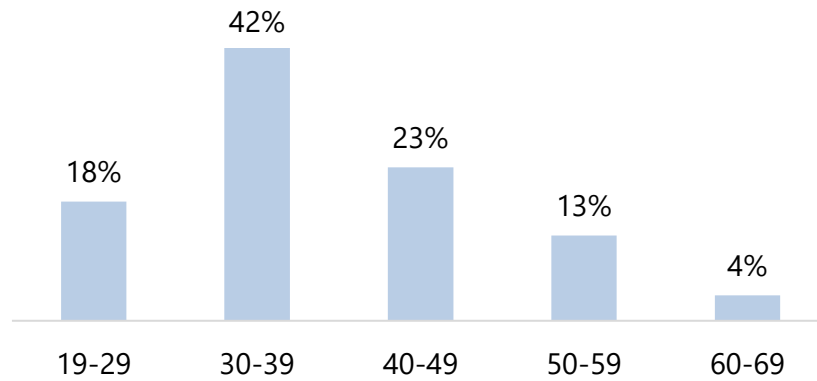


Fig. 2. Avalanche Deaths by Age Group as % of Total, 2011-2022

Table 5. Avalanche Deaths by Health Authority of Injury, 2011-2022^[1,2]

Season	Interior	Fraser	Van. Coastal	Island	Northern	Total
2011-2012	7	0	2	0	1	10
2012-2013	4	0	0	0	1	5
2013-2014	8	0	0	0	1	9
2014-2015	2	0	0	0	3	5
2015-2016	7	0	0	0	7	14
2016-2017	2	0	1	0	1	4
2017-2018	2	0	1	0	1	4
2018-2019	6	0	2	0	0	8
2019-2020	1	0	1	0	3	5
2020-2021	2	0	4	0	3	9
2021-2022	0	0	2	0	2	4
Total	41	0	13	0	23	77

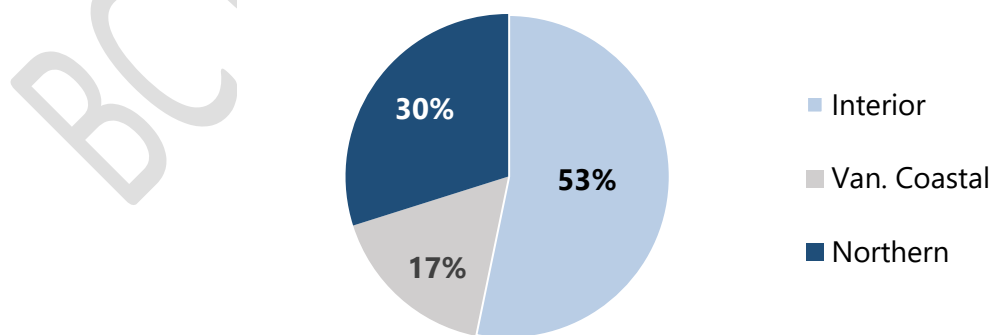


Fig. 3. Avalanche Deaths by Health Authority of Injury as % of Total, 2011-2022^[1,2]

Table 6. Avalanche Deaths by Place of Residence, 2011-2022					
Season	British Columbia	Other Province	USA	Other Country	Total
2011-2012	3	2	3	2	10
2012-2013	3	0	0	2	5
2013-2014	3	4	1	1	9
2014-2015	1	4	0	0	5
2015-2016	5	9	0	0	14
2016-2017	1	1	1	1	4
2017-2018	1	3	0	0	4
2018-2019	2	6	0	0	8
2019-2020	3	0	2	0	5
2020-2021	8	1	0	0	9
2021-2022	2	1	1	0	4
Total	32	31	8	6	77

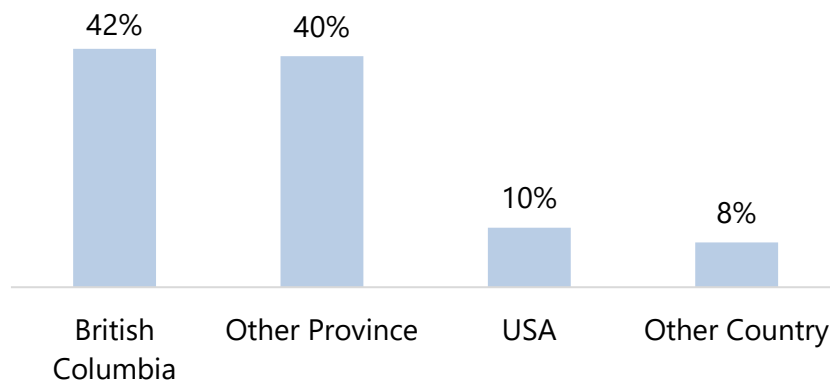


Fig. 4. Avalanche Deaths by Place of Residence as % of Total, 2011-2022

Season	Heli-ski	Ski	Snowboard	Snowmobile	Hike/Snowshoe	Occupational	Total
2011-2012	3	4	0	3	0	0	10
2012-2013	0	3	0	1	0	1	5
2013-2014	1	2	1	5	0	0	9
2014-2015	0	0	0	3	1	1	5
2015-2016	0	2	0	12	0	0	14
2016-2017	1	2	0	1	0	0	4
2017-2018	0	0	1	2	0	1	4
2018-2019	0	3	0	3	2	0	8
2019-2020	0	0	2	2	1	0	5
2020-2021	0	2	1	6	0	0	9
2021-2022	1	2	0	1	0	0	4
Total	6	20	5	39	4	3	77

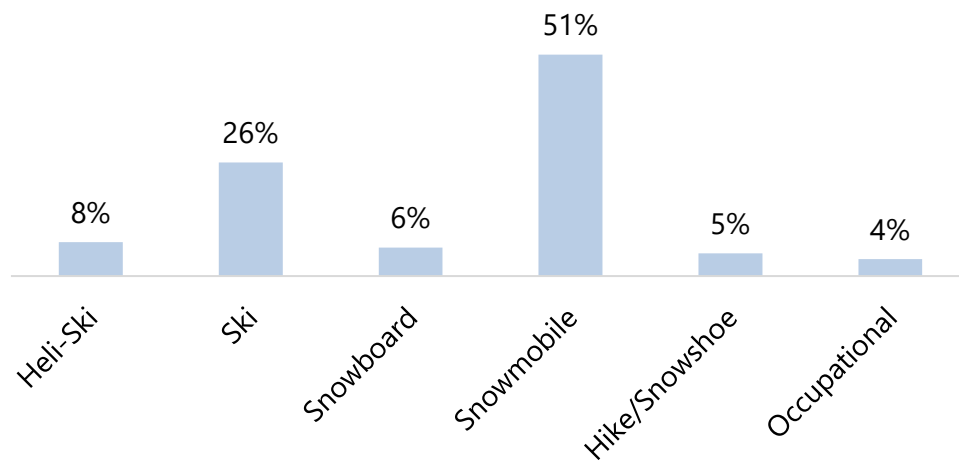


Fig. 5. Avalanche Deaths by Activity as % of Total, 2011-2022

Notes

1. Health Region breakdowns can be found at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/landuse/administrative-boundaries/health-boundaries>
2. Health authority is derived from injury township. Death township is used in cases of unknown or out-of-province injury township.