

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

11,500+

Hospital Emergency
Department Visits 2007-2011

630+

Hospital Admissions
in California 2007-211

0

No available resort-specific safety
information or accident & injury stats
in CA or anywhere in the US

20%

Of skier/snowboarders at California
resorts are not California residents

10-12 Million

There are between 10 and 12
million active skiers and
snowboarders nationwide

80%

Between two-thirds and 80%
of these skiers/snowboarders
are only on the slopes nine
days or less. The average
skier/snowboarder is on the
slopes only five days
per year.

20%

Approximately 20% of the
skier/snowboarders at
California resorts are not
California residents.

25%

Twenty-five percent of
skier/snowboarders are 17
years old or younger.
Thirty-seven percent are
25 years old or younger.
Only 7% are over 55 in age.

30%

Snowboarders are approxi-
mately 30% of the
skier/snowboarder total,
although that percentage
can vary significantly from
region to region or resort
to resort.

No Safety Standards

There are no slope and trail safety laws, regulations or standards set by Federal or California legislatures, government regulatory agencies, the insurance industry or adopted by the snow sport industry. For all intents and purposes, each resort continues to use its own discretion in choosing if or when any slope and trail safety policies, practices and safeguards are followed.

The absence of regulations or standards and the significant variability in ski area use of common safety practices is highly likely to result in significant variability in relative safety from resort to resort and even within the same resort.

National & California Resort Industry

There are 470 Alpine snows sport resorts in 37 states.

- New York has the largest number with 52 resorts. California has 27 and Colorado has 26. Number of skier days (one lone skier or snowboarder for all or part of one day) ranges between 50 and 60 million annually throughout the U.S.
- The Rocky Mountain states, primarily Colorado and Utah, have the most skier days annually (approx. 21 million or 40% of the total reported nationally). California has between 5 and 6 million skier days (approximately 10 % of the national total).

Speed & Safety

The speed of skiers and snowboarders is steadily increasing due to improved equipment technology, snowmaking, and slope and trail grooming.

- A 2005 ASTM study documented skiers traveling at an average speed of approximately 27.6 miles per hour and snowboarders at 24.1 miles per hour.
- A 2012 study at the Western Michigan University School of Medicine on head injuries among skiers and snowboarders in the United States found that the number of head injuries increased 60 percent in a seven-year period, from 9,308 in 2004 to 14,947 in 2010, even as helmet use increased by an almost identical percentage over the same time period.
- Helmet use has steadily increased to approximately 78% in the 2014/2015 season.
- A March 2013 study by the University of Washington concluded that the number of snow-sports related head injuries among youths and adolescents increased 250 percent from 1996 to 2010.



Safety Is Not By Accident

Injuries & Deaths

- Based on a comparative statistical analysis, the Foundation estimates, on average, there are five California resident skier/snowboarder deaths per year.
- Foundation research reveals a five-year (2007-2011) annual average for California residents of at least 9,423 hospital emergency department visits and over 490 hospital admissions in California. Adjusting for the approximately 20% of out of state residents brings those numbers to 11,500 and 630.
 - Eighty or more of those hospital admissions and 1600 or more emergency department visits annually were for brain, spine and vertebral column trauma.
 - An unknown additional large number of serious injuries are cared for at mountain clinics, doctor offices and outpatient surgical centers.
 - Utilizing the Canadian single payer system's ICD 10 coding and applying the more complete Canadian hospital treated injury frequencies to California skier days would result in an estimate of greater than 20,000 emergency department visits and at least 750 hospital admissions annually in California.
- There is no available resort-specific safety information or accident and injury statistics in California or anywhere in the country. Consumers are completely unable to consider safety in their selection of resorts.
- The 39 deaths and 40 catastrophic annual injuries nationwide reported by the National Ski Area Association (NSAA) greatly under states the number of serious accidents and injuries.
 - Ski areas are not required anywhere in the country to report accidents or disclose their injury and fatality statistics. They uniformly refuse to do so. The NSAA is a national trade group representing and promoting ski areas and only collects annually self-reported accident and injury statistics from resorts and their insurers. It does not disclose its database nor subject it to any independent audit or verification. NSAA reports an injury incidence of 2.5 per 1000 skier days with no relative severity index, and only reports deaths as reported by the resorts -- - usually only the deaths occurring on the mountain - prior to transport to a hospital.
- The risk of death during one hour on the slopes in California is two to three times the risk during one hour behind the wheel of an automobile. The risk of injury is 15 to 20 times greater.
- The causes of all snow sport injuries fall into two broad categories, falls and collisions. Collisions (with fixed natural and manmade obstacles, moving vehicles and other skiers/riders) are the cause of 10-20% of all injuries and most of the more serious injuries.