

Snow Doughnuts, Beacon Checkers, Blaster Trailers and Other Low Cost Tools from the Field

Mike P. Stanford

Washington State Department of Transportation, Leavenworth, WA, USA

This presentation will describe a variety of tools and programs from a practitioner's toolbox that have been and continue to be developed. In this age of increasing costs and decreasing budgets, it is more important than ever that Avalanche Professionals, responsible for the safety of themselves and others, think outside the box. Sometimes the simplest is the best. The Snow Doughnut section will describe how the use of a camera can act as a tool to promote and or direct public perception of a particular forecasting or control program and can also be used to teach a large number of people in a short period of time. The Beacon Checker section will describe the use of older beacons to promote worker safety in a very cost effective and user friendly way. The Blaster Trailer section will describe the use of commercially made explosive rounds (Avalanche Guard) and current technologies to develop a relatively low cost, mobile explosive delivery system. Application is for a highway setting and so this device is towed, however, principle could be adapted for other venues. The Red is the Edge topic deals with identifying and marking hazard areas along a highway corridor to aid avalanche, maintenance, rescue, or law enforcement workers in directing the public to safe locations during high avalanche activity.