

Avalanche kills a snowshoer near Park City

Tragedy on a trail: A slide, triggered by powerful winter storm, buries a man under 5 feet of snow

By DEREK P. JENSEN
The Salt Lake Tribune

A relentless winter storm that blanketed Park City with more than a foot of snow turned tragic for two friends who were snowshoeing Thursday about a mile south of the resort's Old Town neighborhood.

Just after 6 p.m., while the men were passing through upper **Daly** Canyon near the Judge Mine, a snow slide caught one of them and buried the man in more than five feet of heavy, wet snow, said Park City Police Chief Lloyd Evans.

The second man, a Park City resident, rushed for help, and returned with several residents and

a Deer Valley Resort search dog. Despite their frantic efforts, they were unable to reach the victim in time.

Jason DeLecour, 34, of Houston, was pronounced dead in a Park City medical clinic later that evening.

"This is a favorite area for snowshoers and cross country skiers," Evans said about the trail where the slide occurred. "My understanding is the residents

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were quite a ways toward getting him out even before the search and rescue [crews] arrived."

Mountains surrounding Park City collected 2 feet of snow Thursday and were among the areas hardest hit in a winter storm that pounded the state.

The National Weather Service reported 12 inches at the bases of most ski resorts and 20 inches to 2 feet of snow at higher elevations. Some of the state's southern mountain ranges recorded 2 feet of snow by early afternoon, said Dave Sanders with the National Weather Service.

"It was quite wet," he said. "We were borderline rain versus snow in the valleys."

Salt Lake City's east benches were blanketed with 6 inches of snow, while Ogden reported 3 to 6 inches and the Cache Valley saw at least 3 inches of slush.

The rain caused flooding that ravaged homes in parts of Utah County and Draper, and wreaked similar havoc in Farr West in Weber County.

Little Cottonwood Canyon was closed Thursday night for avalanche control, while plows worked overtime to clear Big Cottonwood and Parleys canyons.

Traffic snarled on much of Interstate 15 on Thursday afternoon, including a 4-mile stretch north of Payson where a multi-car pileup closed the freeway for two hours, according to Sgt. David Decker with Utah Highway Patrol. No serious injuries were reported in the pileup, which involved three tractor-trailers.

More snow is expected this afternoon, continuing into Saturday. Decker said the valley could see several inches. Another 1 to 2 feet could hit the