



## AAC Publications

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### **Fall on Ice — Insufficient Footwear**

Oregon, Mt. Hood, South Side

**At 9:42 a.m. on Sunday, July 26, the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office was notified of an accident on Mt. Hood. A married couple (both in their early 30s) had fallen about 700 feet (initially reported as 1,000 feet) and had suffered injuries.**

Other climbers on the mountain made their way to where the two had fallen and rendered aid. Their location was determined to be west of the Hogsback, behind Crater Rock, at approximately 10,000 feet, having come to rest near the Hot Rocks fumarole. Various agencies responded, and a team of rescuers reached the climbers just after 1 p.m. Rescuers stabilized the woman, who was more seriously injured, and began the descent to Timberline Lodge, arriving at around 6 p.m. She was transported to a hospital for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries.

#### ANALYSIS

These climbers were wearing micro-spikes instead of technical crampons. MICRO- spikes, Yaktrax, and similar traction devices for trail runners are being spotted more frequently on the mountain, but they are not safe to use; appropriate crampons and boots are necessary in all conditions on Mt. Hood. Rescue coordinators also stressed in their post-accident notes that July 26 is late for climbing Mt. Hood, and that conditions are more difficult and dangerous in late summer, including increased falling ice and rockfall.

The climbers were roped together but were not setting protection to hold a fall. Depending on the team's experience, the angle of the slope, and the snow conditions, a team that ropes up to protect against falls (versus crevasses) should strongly consider running belays using pickets or ice screws for protection. (Sources: Clackamas County Sheriff's Office and Portland Mountain Rescue.)

**Images**

## Article Details

Author	Clackamas County Sheriff's Office and Portland Mountain Rescue
Publication	ANAM
Volume	12
Issue	74
Page	79
Copyright Date	2021
Article Type	Accident reports