

City of Clearwater Snow and Ice Control Policy

1. Introduction

The City of Clearwater believes that it is in the best interests of the residents for the City to assume the basic responsibility for control of snow and ice on the City streets. Reasonable ice and snow control is necessary for routine travel and emergency services. The City will provide such control in a safe and cost effective manner. The City will use City employees, equipment and/or private contractors to provide this service.

In providing snow and ice control, the City endeavors to maintain adequate traction for vehicles properly equipped for winter driving conditions. The City, however, does not guarantee bare, dry pavement after each snowfall or that streets are totally free of ice and snow or related driving hazards common to Minnesota winter conditions.

Although this policy is intended to represent the policies and procedures of the City of Clearwater in regards to snow and ice control, the City reserves the right to change procedures depending upon variables found with weather conditions.

2. When will the City start snow or ice control operations?

The Public Works Supervisor or Mayor will decide when to begin snow or ice control operations. The criteria for that decision are:

1. Snow accumulation of 2 inches or more;
2. Drifting of snow that causes problems for travel;
3. Icy conditions which seriously affect travel;
4. Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use of streets.

3. How snow will be plowed.

Snow will be plowed in a manner so as to minimize any traffic obstructions. Snow will be plowed from the center of the street to the right side of the street traveling in each direction. The discharge shall go onto the boulevard area of the street. In times of extreme snowfall, streets will not always immediately be able to be completely cleared of snow.

4. Priorities and schedule for which streets will be plowed.

The City Hall and Fire Department parking lots will be the first priority. The second priority will be the streets that intersect with Highway 24 and the streets with higher traffic volume and major inclines. The third priority streets are low volume residential streets. The fourth priority areas are the alleys and other city parking lots. The fifth priority areas are the ice skating rink and bike trail. The final priority will be any sidewalks that failed to comply with the snow removal requirement.

5. Weather conditions.

Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of City employees and equipment. Factors that may delay snow and ice control include; ice storms, blizzard conditions, severe cold, significant winds and limited visibility.

6. Use of salt, sand, and other chemicals.

The City will use sand, salt and other chemicals when there are hazardous ice or slippery conditions. The City is concerned about the affect of such chemicals on the environment and will limit its use for that reason.

7. Work schedule for snowplow operators.

Snowplow operators will be expected to work eight-hour shifts. In severe snow emergencies, operators will sometimes have to work in excess of eight-hour shifts. Operators will take a fifteen-minute break every two hours with a half-hour meal break after four hours.

8. Vehicle parking.

Following any snowfall between the dates of November 1st of each year to April 1st of the year next following, it shall be unlawful to park or leave standing any vehicle or part thereof on any City street or alleyway from 2:00am until such time as snow plowing curb-to-curb has been completed on such street or alleyway. All vehicles or parts thereof found in violation may be towed at the owner's expense.

This parking prohibition includes parking vehicles or part thereof on the street or right of way, whether improved with curb, gutter and pavement or not improved.

9. Removal of snow, ice or rubbish from public sidewalks

The owner and the occupant of any property adjacent to a public sidewalk shall use diligence to keep such sidewalk safe for pedestrians regardless of whether the sidewalk is located in front of a boulevard, directly in front of the property, or

within the street right of way. No such owner or occupant shall allow snow, ice, dirt, or rubbish to remain on the sidewalk longer than twenty-four (24) hours after its deposit thereon. Failure to comply with this section shall constitute a violation.

10. Pushing Snow onto a public right-of-way or roadway

In accordance with MN State Statute, property owners or occupants are prohibited from depositing snow on a public right-of-way or roadway. This includes pushing snow across the roadway onto an adjacent property.

12. Property Damage

Snow plowing and ice control operations can cause property damage even under the best circumstances and care on the part of the City. The major types of damage are to improvements in the City right-of-way, which typically extends approximately 10 feet to 15 feet beyond the curb. The intent of the right-of-way is to provide room for snow storage, utilities, sidewalks, and other City uses. Damage to fences, trees, or other private improvements will not be repaired or replaced by the City if they are in the right-of-way. Lawns that are scraped or gouged by City equipment will be repaired by seeding the following spring. Residents are responsible to assist by watering the areas that are repaired.

In instances where there is a disagreement as to the source of the damage and the responsible party, the City shall determine the responsibility.

11. Mailboxes

Property owners or occupants are responsible for shoveling snow from around their mailboxes to ensure delivery of mail.

Only mailboxes installed according to the guidelines established by the United State Postal Service (USPS) will be covered under this provision. Mailboxes and posts should be constructed securely enough to withstand snow rolling off a plow or wing. The City will bear the cost of the repair or replacement, if necessary, of a damaged mailbox only if it is a result of City equipment actually hitting the mailbox, not from the weight of snow. The City will install replacement parts or mailbox of standard size non-decorative type, at a value of no more than fifty dollars (\$50) for a single mail box. The City will make temporary repairs to mailboxes for mail delivery if City plows actually hit a mailbox. When weather and time permit, the Public Works Department will complete the repairs or replacement.

In instances where there is a disagreement as to the source of the damage and the responsible party, the City shall determine the responsibility.