



**WINTER MAINTENANCE PROGRAM  
FOR THE  
CITY OF ROCHESTER**

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PREPARED BY:  
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**I. DISPATCHING PROCEDURES FOR WINTER STORMS  
REQUIRING ACTION BY CITY STREETS CREWS**

- A. During regular work day hours, the Police and Streets personnel will monitor the condition of City streets for possible actions or applications needed to insure safe vehicular and pedestrian travel.
- B. During non-work day hours, it is the duty of the City's Police Department to keep the designated employee/foreman/director apprised of the condition of the City's roads for safe vehicular travel.
- C. During off hours, the police dispatch will notify the After-Hours/On-Call employee (after-hours DPW telephone number) that road conditions are becoming poor and anti-skid material is needed; the decision of the police triggers the start of the program.
- D. After the police report the condition to the After-Hours/On-Call Foreman, the lead plow truck driver ("supervisor") will be contacted. He/she will assess the situation and dispatch the necessary manpower and/or equipment to respond accordingly. The Lead Plow Driver will contact Police Dispatch and inform them that he/she is on duty and will be the Police Point-of-Contact through the duration of the storm or until further notice (provide name and cell phone number). The Lead Plow Driver will keep Police Dispatch informed of the DPW storm recovery strategy and the number of plows/salt trucks operating within the city.
- E. The foreman/director will monitor or take part in the necessary action required by the storm until a safe condition is restored. The extent of the action taken is mandated by the size and magnitude of the storm and is a judgment call by the individual in charge (foreman/director).

**II PLOWING AND SALTING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

- A. During a winter storm there are a number of elements that must be taken into consideration before a reasonable and responsible course of action can be determined. All public works employees are expected to be ready and available when needed for snow work, especially when the forecast is for stormy weather.
- B. Forecast
  - The forecast is one element that must be watched carefully.
  - Long-term storms require long-term action, and it is important to be aware of the forecast at all times so that manning and materials can be planned accordingly.
  - Avoid overreacting during a short-term storm.

B. Depth of Snowfall

- The course of action is determined by the amount and duration of snowfall.
- 2" and falling: Call personnel into work so that by the time the snow reaches a depth of 3", all plows are in their respective areas moving snow.
- The supervisor, at this point, might opt to plow only the primary routes until the storm reaches a more plowable depth, at which point the remaining streets can be plowed. This option is a judgment call based upon predictions and must be carefully considered before implementing.
- If the 2" and falling occurs after sunset and is a dry type of snow with a heavier accumulation predicted, the supervisor might opt to salt only and return at a point in the storm when the plows would be more productive.
- Whichever method is used, the supervisor must make the on-duty dispatcher aware of his plan of action before implementation so the police are aware of the plan.
- Safe vehicular travel must be maintained at all times.
- Under no circumstances is any snowfall to be permitted to exceed 4" without the plowing schedule being implemented. Some snowfalls of a lesser depth, for example a 1" or less snowfall, may be handled with a salting operation only.
- If the forecast calls for above freezing temperatures during the storm and below freezing after the storm, crews must utilize methods to try push the slush as far from the curb line as possible so the freezing slush does not block storm water basins.

C. Salting Operations

- A salt application depends on weather and temperature. Salting is normally not effective when conditions are less than 20 degrees unless the area salted is subject to heavy vehicular traffic or in direct sunlight.
- Salt should be applied sporadically and not 100% throughout. By applying a short spread of 20' to 50' stopping and allowing 100'-150' intervals of no salt before applying another 20' to 50' application, adequate traction for motorists will be maintained.
- A spread of salt preceding intersections/stop signs/hill and bridges should be applied during a salting operation.
- The City's stockpile of rock salt must be constantly monitored to always maintain a level that will insure continued operation of service throughout the winter.

- A brine solution will be applied concurrently with the salt operation below 25 degrees. The solution will be sprayed on the salt as it comes out of the spreader. Application amount will come to 10 gallons/mile or adjusted as needed based on weather and road conditions. The supervisor will determine if application amount should be modified.
- Pretreatment of roadway surfaces will be a determination of the Streets Foreman or on-duty supervisor. A pretreatment can be made prior to a storm, as long as the storm is not predicted to start out with above freezing temperatures and rain, washing the chemical away. Typically, an application will be made in and around major roads and intersections up to 24 hours before a winter storm. Pretreatment prevents a bond from forming between the pavement and the snow and ice when the storm starts. Pretreatments can be thought of as "buying time" in the early stages of a storm until subsequent chemical applications become effective.

#### D. Removal of Snow from Parking Structures

- In areas where winter weather affects the operation of the parking structures, removal of snow and ice is necessary, if not paramount, for functional performance, the public's safety, and the long-term durability of the structure.
- If the 2" snow and falling occurs, a determination will be made to close the top levels of the parking structures until other areas of the city can be made safe. The upper levels of the parking structures will remain closed until snow removal operations can be made. This decision will be made by the individual in charge (foreman/director) and coordinated with the Police Department.
- Snow on the upper levels shall be windrowed to one side by use of the flatbed truck with the V-Plow Blade. It will then be lifted into 3-yard dump trucks by the compact wheel loader (mini-loader). The snow will then be hauled to the Municipal Training Center (former Waste Water Treatment Plant).
- Under no circumstances will a larger vehicle be operated in or on the parking structures. The weight of the equipment and type of attachments must be carefully considered to limit potential damage to the structure.
- Snow plow blades should not come in direct contact with expansion joints, deck membranes, or joint sealants. Blades should be kept a minimum of 1/2 in. above these sensitive materials. Plows must be equipped with well-maintained rubber blades to minimize impact damage. Impact forces caused by pushing equipment or snow into walls or spandrels should be avoided.
- Stairs, landings, and other areas of pedestrian egress must also be clear of snow and ice.
- The use of chemical deicers can affect the structure's efficiency, life safety, and longevity. Only non-corrosive, environmentally friendly deicers shall be used on the parking structure surfaces.

- All levels of the parking structures shall be washed-down following the winter season. Chemical deicers are also deposited by vehicles traversing lower levels.

E. Crew Considerations

- During prolonged storms, it is the responsibility of the supervisor on duty to monitor the fatigue level of the plow/salting force and to insure that sufficient breaks and/or meals are taken to make sure the operators and drivers are alert at all times.
- If warranted (during prolonged severe weather conditions), relief drivers and operators should be notified as early as possible to stand by. The snow plowing/salting schedule of trucks and potential drivers provides for additional personnel, if needed.

F. Plowing Zones

- The City is divided into six basic zones for a quick plowing response time to all areas of the City. This method of deploying plow and salt apparatus is known as the “Shotgun Method”, as it is quick and covers a large area.

G. Snow Routes

- Roads are designated as primary and secondary routes.
- The primary routes in each zone should be plowed first to enable emergency vehicles (fire, police, and ambulance) access to within two blocks of any residence or within the reach of a fire hose, for example.
- After the primary routes are cleared, the plows can move on to the secondary routes in their assigned operating zone. Plowing of secondary routes will start on the east side of a zone and continue in a westerly direction. When the assigned zone is completed, the employee must contact the supervisor on duty for further direction. If the supervisor is not available, the employee must contact a plow in another zone to see if assistance is needed.
- Before plowing of the designated primary routes, the supervisor must make a decision as to the extent of plowing required; for example, should the road be plowed curb-to-curb or should only a path in each direction be plowed. As an example, if the storm were predicted to only last an hour with a small accumulation, the directive prior to dispatch would be a curb-to-curb plowing to avoid the need for a return trip. If the storm is predicted to continue for 6-8 hours or more, the supervisor might opt to plow only a pass in each direction and complete the plowing curb-to-curb on the return round.
- Residential neighborhoods, especially cul-de-sacs, may receive just one pass until time and conditions permit for smaller plow trucks to enter for detailed clean up; sometimes 24 hours after the storm subsides.
- After the primary and secondary routes are cleared, all City-owned parking lots and sidewalks must be cleared.

H. Special Considerations

- All City parking lots in the downtown area are to be cleared between the hours of 2:30AM and 6:00AM, depending on the time the snow event commences. When possible, drivers should use care in clearing parking lots that are adjoining to residential parking lots and be aware of the sound and light impact the operation may have on the neighborhood.
- Main Street will be wind rowed to the center from bridge to bridge. Additional wind rowing is required on downtown streets such as 2nd, 3rd, 4th, University, and Walnut.
- Clear sidewalks at City Hall prior to 7:30am after an evening snow event.

I. Snow Loading/Hauling

- If necessary, the loading will be done with the City's auger-type loader.
- Loader moving and arrangements have been made for extra trucks, if needed.
- All snow from the loading/hauling operations is to be disposed of at the Municipal Training Center unless specifically directed by the foreman/director.
- Snow loading is required generally within 24 hours after the snow event has concluded and will be done during non-peak hours to avoid traffic conflicts.
- The snow-loading procedure should begin when parking becomes difficult along the curb line. This decision is a costly one and should only be made after the on-duty supervisor completes an inspection of the area.
- This operation will commence after the snow event and during the nighttime hours when the traffic downtown is minimal.

J. Additional Operator Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of the individual driver to maintain ballasts on plow trucks and to make sure blades are attached properly. A complete pre-trip inspection must be completed before reporting to their scheduled area. Drivers are required to check plow cutting edges every two hours to avoid wear into plow mold boards.
- Operators will use care at all times to insure that the snow is not pushed onto sidewalks any more than necessary in all instances and especially in areas with narrow or non-existent green belts.
- Delineator posts will be placed at corners identifying Rochester Community School's bus stops. All operators are to try and avoid the placement of excessive snow at these locations at all times.

- In the event of a vehicle break down, the driver is responsible to contact their supervisor immediately of the condition they are experiencing. The supervisor and fleet manager will make the decision if the vehicle can be driven back to the DPW yard or if a tow truck service is required. In the event another vehicle is available, the driver will take that vehicle until their previous vehicle is operational again. In the event that an additional vehicle is not available, resources from other routes will be re-directed as needed to achieve completion of each specific section.

K. Mailbox and Sod Damage Policy

- During snow removal operations, many miles of roadway must be cleared and maintained for safe travel. Unfortunately, during this process, mailboxes may be damaged by the weight of the thrown snow and in some instances by the strike of a plow truck.
- It is important for residents who have mailboxes at the road edge to prepare for winter by “shaking their mailbox.” The action is intended to prevent mailboxes from being damaged by snow pushed off the road by snowplows. Residents should tighten screws and bolts prior to our first winter storm and replace rotting posts.
- Snow plow drivers will notify their supervisor immediately after returning to the yard, if mailbox damage was suspected on their route. This information will be investigated after a resident notification is received.
- As soon as possible after receiving a resident notification of a damaged mailbox, (usually within 24 hours after the snow storm subsides); a Public Works representative will evaluate the damaged mailbox to determine if the damage is due to a snow plow truck striking the mailbox or if the force of the snow coming off of the snow plow blade caused an un-secure mailbox to come off its post or a rotted post to break off.
- If the snow plow physically hits and damages the mailbox and or post, the City will reimburse for the mailbox and/or post with the same type, up to a maximum cost of \$100. If the snow discharged from the plow damages the box and or post, the property owner is responsible for the repairs or replacement.
- The City of Rochester respects its resident’s property and realizes the importance of our residents receiving mail in a timely fashion. A temporary mailbox will be provided by the DPW to any resident who has mailbox damage due to snow removal operations regardless if the cause was by snow or by city equipment. This will be provided free of charge until a replacement mailbox is installed or spring, whichever comes first.
- Sod damage is possible in areas adjacent to roadways (city easements and right-of-ways). DPW will maintain a list of the damaged areas and make restoration of topsoil and seed in the spring. Residents are encouraged to report sod damage.

### III. PROCEDURES FOR DECLARING A SNOW EMERGENCY

- A. The City Manager, Police Chief, and Director/Foreman shall consult to determine if a snow emergency is necessary. The City Manager or his designee shall declare a snow emergency when a storm exceeds six inches in depth and/or warrants such action based on the actual or anticipated severity of the storm.
- B. The City Manager or his designee shall inform the Mayor of the declaration.
- C. When a snow emergency is declared it will be the policy of the City to enforce parking restrictions on all roads, community-wide.
- D. When a state of snow emergency is in effect, the following announcement must be made to the radio stations, TV stations and newspapers listed below:

*“City of Rochester declares a state of snow emergency in effect. All vehicles must be removed from city streets whenever possible. The snow emergency will stay in effect until it is lifted by the City.”*

- E. The Local Media
  - **City Media Posting**
    - City Website <http://www.rochestermi.org>
    - City Cable TV Station
  - **“Notify Me” News Blast**

**IV. SNOW PLOWING/SALTING SCHEDULE (ZONE number does not indicate priority)**

- A. ZONE 1 Eastside (Major & Local Streets)**
- B. ZONE 2 Eastside (Cul-de-sacs and Eyebrows)**
- C. ZONE 3 Westside (Major & Local Streets)**
- D. ZONE 4 Westside (Cul-de-sacs, Dead Ends and Alleys)**
- E. ZONE 5 Downtown Parking Lots**
- F. ZONE 6 Downtown and Miscellaneous Sidewalks**