

CITY OF RIPON SNOW & ICE REMOVAL POLICY

Revised 10-14-19

In order for a snow and ice removal program to be effective, a written policy must be established. This policy will guide personnel of the Department of Public Works concerned with deicing, plowing, and snow removal efforts. It not only gives snow removal crews a set of guidelines to follow, but also informs the general public of the procedures being followed so they may have a better understanding of the city's snow removal efforts.

This document is the official policy for snow removal for the City of Ripon. All existing ordinances regarding snow removal from sidewalks, and parking regulations for snow emergencies remain in effect, and are considered a necessary part of the overall snow removal plan.

The City of Ripon will strive to maintain safe conditions for drivers observing winter driving conditions. However, this is not an absolute "bare pavement" policy.

It must be recognized that, although this policy sets general guidelines to be followed, each storm has its own character with variable conditions such as wind, extreme temperatures, timing, duration, and moisture content. The policy must remain flexible and take into consideration these variables.

DETERMINATION OF NEED FOR SNOW & ICE CONTROL PROCEDURES

The Director of Public Works or Lead Supervisor will keep themselves apprised of changing weather conditions. The Department of Public Works relies heavily on the observations of Police Department personnel and various Internet weather sites to alert them to road conditions any time of the day. Weather reports issued by the National Weather Service also aid in preparation of snow and ice control deployments.

The implementation of the policy shall be dictated by actual road conditions. Three inches or more accumulation will generally prompt salting to stop and plowing procedures to start. However, if the onset of the storm is accompanied by freezing rain or icing conditions, deicing procedures may already have been instituted.

The responsibility for ordering out personnel and equipment for winter operations shall primarily be with the Director of Public Works or the Lead Supervisor. During off duty hours, the Police Department will advise of changing conditions.

SNOW & ICE CONTROL PROCEDURES

Deployment for ice control or snow plowing will commence at the direction of the Director of Public Works or Lead Supervisor. Services shall be provided in accordance with the following procedures.

ICE CONTROL

Ice control will commence, when, in the opinion of the Director of Public Works or Lead Supervisor, an unsafe condition for travel exists. Deicing operations can vary greatly, depending on whether there is a need for citywide coverage, or if the slippery areas are isolated. The Department of Public Works and the Police Department will be in radio contact to assure that priority locations are addressed in a timely manner. Attention is given to city streets according to the following priority:

- Priority 1 Emergency Routes – See Emergency Maps
- Priority 2 Main Streets (Arterials)
- Priority 3 Secondary Streets (Collectors)
- Priority 4 Low Volume Residential Through Streets (Locals), Dead Ends, Cul-De-Sacs and Alleys

When icy conditions occur in the city, hazardous situations will present themselves in numerous locations at the same time. It must be realized that salting crews cannot be in all places at all times, and the affect of salting is not immediate. The city uses salt by spreader application for most deicing operations. It should be noted that salt is only 20% as effective at 20 degrees as it is at 30 degrees. At colder temperatures it is even less effective. At very low temperatures, salt/abrasives may be used. For icy or packed snow conditions, we may use a salt/abrasive mixture to provide traction. These mixtures will be used at intersections where start/stop movements are frequent, at railroad crossings, on bridges, and on steep hills where slippery conditions make driving hazardous. The use of salt shall be minimized during extremely cold temperatures.

Anti-icing is a road maintenance strategy that attempts to keep the bond between ice and the pavement surface from forming. It involves applying salt brine before or at the very beginning of a storm at bridges, curves, and other hazardous locations. Using this strategy reduces total salt use and allows a higher level of service to the traveling public.

SNOW PLOWING

Snow plowing will commence when, in the opinion of the Director of Public Works or Lead Supervisor, sufficient snow exists to be a hazard to traffic. Snow events with accumulations of (3) inches or more will prompt the Director of Public Works or Lead Supervisor to prepare for City-wide plowing operations to include all streets, alleys, and municipal parking lots. Attention is given to city streets according to the designated priorities as follows:

- Priority 1 Emergency Routes – See Emergency Maps
- Priority 2 Main Streets (Arterials)
- Priority 3 Secondary Streets (Collectors)
- Priority 4 Low Volume Residential Through Streets (Locals), Dead Ends, Cul-De-Sacs and Alleys

Where steep hills or other safety concerns exist, a street may be advanced to a higher priority for plowing. For operating efficiency some lower priority streets may be done when equipment is in the area rather than doubling back at a later time. This will vary by storm severity.

Plows must make two to four passes down a street to clear it curb to curb. The city tries to do this at one time so residents can shovel out driveways and sidewalks. It is best to wait, if possible, until we've finished plowing before shoveling out your driveway approach.

Parked and abandoned vehicles present obstacles to proper snow removal. Please refrain from parking on city streets during all snow removal operations.

When heavy snows are occurring during peak travel times, emergency routes, main streets (arterials) will be continually patrolled. Secondary streets (collectors) will be patrolled as frequently as possible. Low volume residential streets (locals) may not be plowed until the storm ends.

SNOW REMOVAL

Snow removal is necessary after heavy storms or a series of storms where there is limited or no snow storage area. Snow removal does not occur every time plowing operations occur. This will vary depending on the timing of the storm, the amount of precipitation received, and the forecast.

The Department of Public Works will remove snow first from areas where it causes the most disruption to traffic and parking. This will generally include Watson St and arterial streets with little or no terrace area. The next priority will be collector streets, followed by cul-de-sacs. As time permits, the Director of Public Works may select additional streets within city for widening to the face of the curb. This may be necessary due to traffic congestion, parking, school activities, or other traffic concerns.

In the days following a heavy storm or series of storms, Department of Public Works crews will remove snow piles from dead ends, municipal parking lots, and cul-de-sacs during normal working hours. This operation will not necessarily be performed after every storm event.

Downtown:

Below is a brief explanation of how snow will be managed in the Downtown this winter. The ultimate goal is to reduce the windrows and ice built-up in the parking stalls at the curb, thus making it as effortless as possible for the public to access the businesses.

1. The City asks property owners to clear any snow, ice or other debris which has been deposited on the sidewalk next to their property within 24 hours from the last snow fall. For safety and drainage reasons, the City asks that all snow is shoveled into the street next to the curb.
2. The City appreciates the continued diligence and efforts of the business community in helping to keep the Downtown accessible during snow events.
3. The [Heart of Our City](#) - DPW provides a valuable service beyond what the City and business community is able to provide. When required by virtue of a snowfall event, DPW teams begin snow clearing activities at 2a.m.
4. DPW will attempt to pile snow on the curb line on each side of a block. This is the closest space to place snow and avoids someone moving the snow across one or two travel lanes, plus it deals with the most troubled areas, the intersections.
5. DPW crews along with outside contractors will remove these windrows typically on the third day after a day storm.
6. Snow removal from the downtown will be determined by accumulation. Removal will begin when the snow fall is over 2" however if its accumulation it is up to the Director of Public Work or Lead Supervisors discretion for removal of the accumulation.
7. Snow falls that are day storms create a challenge; they take a minimum of 3 working days to remove. With night storms there is the possibility of removal on the day after last snow fall.

OPERATIONAL NOTES

EMERGENCY DECLARATION

PER MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 13.20.030 WINTER PARKING

Snow Emergency- The mayor shall have the right to declare a snow emergency pursuant to Wisconsin Statute 166.23. A proclamation by the mayor will require that all vehicles be removed from the streets to allow the clearing of the streets and alleys. Any violators of the emergency order will be ticketed or towed pursuant to the provisions of this chapter herein.

(Ord. 857 §1, 1988; Ord. 824 §1, 1986; prior code §7.04)

(Ord. No. 1353, 1-12-2010)

Winter Parking- No person shall park at any time his automobile or other vehicle in zones marked for pedestrians or other traffic, or in areas designated by the police department as "no parking" areas, by signs erected either temporarily or permanently, or upon any of the streets in the city between three a.m. or six a.m. of each day from midnight of November 15th through to midnight of March 31st of the subsequent year. In the event the owner, or operator, of such vehicle shall not attend to its removal, the police department is authorized to move such vehicles to some other suitable location, at the owner's expense.

Parking During Snow Removal Period- When after any snowfall, which the director of public works and the chief of police shall deem to be sufficiently heavy to necessitate its removal from vehicular traveled portions of the streets, the chief of police shall forthwith establish "no parking" zones on any streets where such snow removal operations will be taking place. Such no parking areas shall be marked with appropriate moveable signs not less than four hours prior to the commencement of the snow removal operation, and such street may be shut off and blocked while the crews are operating thereon. It shall be the duty of the operator of a motor vehicle to check his vehicle after each snowfall to determine whether it is parked in an area from which snow is to be removed forthwith. In the event the owner, or operator, of such vehicle shall not attend to its removal, the police department is authorized to move such vehicle to some other suitable location, at the expense of the owner thereof, so as not to interfere with snow removal.

PRIVATE REMOVAL OF SNOW

15.24.010 - Removal—Owner or occupant responsibility—By city—Cost assessment.

The owner or occupant of any lot or parcel shall each day remove all snow and ice which may have fallen or accumulated upon the sidewalk in front of such lot or parcel; provided, when ice has so formed that it cannot be removed, the owner or the occupant shall keep the same sprinkled with material which will prevent the sidewalk from being dangerous to pedestrians.(Ord. 1083 (part), 1996).

15.24.015 - Corner/intersection lots, and lots adjoining rights-of-way

The owner or occupant of a corner lot shall be required to clear sidewalks per [Section 15.24.010](#) in their portion of the intersection, including associated handicap ramps. If ramps are installed the owner or occupant shall also be required to clear the gutter of snow and ice, as above, a minimum of two feet past the curb line. The owner or occupant of lots adjoining "T" intersections shall be required to clear sidewalks and ramps leading into the intersection as above. The owner or occupant of lots adjoining rights-of-way including, but not limited to, railroads, trails, utilities, and unopened streets shall be required to clear sidewalks as above to the midpoint of the adjoining right-of-way.(Ord. 1083 (part), 1996).

15.24.020- Deposit on streets prohibited

No person shall deposit snow from any driveway, sidewalk, or from areas situated inside the lot lines of a parcel on the roadway of any public street. (Ord. 1083 (part), 1996)

5.24.030 - Penalty

If the owner or occupant of a parcel fails to comply with any provision of this chapter, corrective action will be ordered by the director of public works or the code enforcement officer, and the cost thereof shall be assessed against the property together with a penalty of twenty-five dollars.(Ord. 1083 (part), 1996).

5.22.020- Interference with fire hydrant- No one shall interfere with accessibility to a fire hydrant by piling or dumping material near it without first obtaining permission from the appropriate municipal authority. (Ord. 1162 (part), 2001).

DAMAGED MAILBOXES

See Mailbox Replacement Policy located on the city's website www.cityofripon.com

STALLED VEHICLES

Department of Public Works personnel shall not tow or push stalled vehicles unless so directed by the Police Department in the case of an emergency. Department of Public Works personnel shall not provide rides for stranded motorists. Assistance may be provided to the motorist by contacting a supervisor or calling police.

COMPLAINTS

All citizen issues concerning snow and ice control efforts should be routed to the Department of Public Works. The Director will determine appropriate follow-up responses to citizen inquiries and someone may make contact with each citizen within 72 hours of initial concern.

DRIVERS

For safety reasons plow truck drivers are not to exit trucks during regular snow plowing operations.

SIDEWALK-PRIVATE RESPONSIBILITY

All sidewalks adjacent to private property are the responsibility of the property owner. The City's responsibility is to plow the streets and keep them open to traffic. Due to the location of some sidewalks and the volume of snow being moved off of the streets, there may be occurrences when plowing operations may deposit significant amounts of snow onto the sidewalks. When this occurs, it is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner to remove all snow from the sidewalk. All complaint calls about private sidewalks not being cleared should be routed to the Public Works Secretary for complaint follow-up and code enforcement.

PRIVATE DRIVES AND PARKING LOTS

No private driveways or parking lots will be plowed by Department of Public Works crews. Some snow and ice may be deposited in private driveways by normal plowing operations. **This snow will not be removed by Department of Public Works Crews.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A STREET NEAR MINE WAS JUST PLOWED. DOES THIS MEAN MINE WILL BE NEXT?

PLOW ROUTES IN THE CITY OF RIPON ARE DESIGNED TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION ARTERIAL AND COLLECTOR STREETS, STREETS AROUND SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, BUS ROUTES, HILLS, AND BRIDGES. RESIDENTIAL STREETS ARE THEN PLOWED BY BREAKING THE ROUTE INTO SECTIONS. BECAUSE OF THIS THE STREET NEXT TO YOU MAY HAVE BEEN PLOWED BUT DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN YOUR STREET WILL BE PLOWED NEXT.

WHY DID THE SNOWPLOW BURY MY SIDEWALK?

THE CITY OF RIPON DOES NOT INTENTIONALLY BURY SIDEWALKS. THE PLOW DRIVERS NEED TO PLOW AT THE RIGHT SPEED TO PUT THE SNOW ON TOP OF THE SNOW BANKS. IF THEY PLOW TOO SLOW THE SNOW SLOUGHS OFF THE BANKS INTO THE ROAD, NARROWING THE STREETS AS WINTER PROGRESSES. IF THEY PLOW TOO FAST THE SNOW GOES OVER THE BANK AND SOMETIMES ONTO THE SIDEWALKS. TO ADD DIFFICULTY TO THIS ACT THE AREA BETWEEN THE CURB AND SIDEWALK OFTEN TIMES IS QUITE NARROW OFFERING LITTLE STORAGE AREA FOR THE SNOW.

CAN YOU PLOW MY STREET FIRST IN CASE I HAVE A MEDICAL EMERGENCY AND AN AMBULANCE NEEDS TO GET THROUGH?

THE CITY OF RIPON POLICE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS WORK CLOSELY DURING SNOW EVENTS. IF THERE IS AN EMERGENCY, MEDICAL OR OTHERWISE, WE WORK TOGETHER TO ASSURE ACCESS FOR ALL EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

WILL I GET A BILL OR CITATION IF I DON'T REMOVE SNOW & ICE FROM MY SIDEWALK? WHAT IF THE SNOW WAS FROM A CITY PLOW?

YOU HAVE 24 HOURS FROM THE END OF A SNOW EVENT TO CLEAR YOUR SIDEWALK, REGARDLESS IF THE SNOW WAS DEPOSITED FROM A PLOW. IF YOU DO NOT REMOVE THE SNOW AND ICE FROM YOUR SIDEWALK WITHIN 24 HOURS THE CITY WILL HAVE A CONTRACTOR REMOVE IT AT YOUR EXPENSE.

WHY DO I GET MORE SNOW ON MY CORNER LOT THAN OTHERS DO IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BLOCK?

ALL OF THE SNOW BUILDS/ACCUMULATES ON THE PLOW AS IT STARTS TO TURN THE

CORNER. ALL OF THIS EXTRA SNOW “RELEASES” FROM THE PLOW AS IT COMPLETELY TURNS THE CORNER, TYPICALLY LEAVING A LARGE PILE AT THE POINT OF TURN. ALSO, THERE IS MORE ROAD SURFACE AREA IN AN INTERSECTION THAN IN A TYPICAL MID BLOCK ROAD AREA WHICH FURTHER INCREASES THE AMOUNT OF SNOW COMING OFF THE PLOW AT THAT POINT. IN ADDITION TO THE SNOW AT THE CORNER THERE WILL ALSO BE A LARGER AMOUNT OF SNOW ALONG THE CURB LINE UNTIL THE TRUCK 50-100 FEET DOWN THE BLOCK.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT SNOW PLOWS THAT BLOCK MY DRIVEWAY OR MAILBOX WITH SNOW?

THIS IS AN UNFORTUNATE SIDE EFFECT OF PLOWING ALL STREETS IN THE CITY. ALL SNOW MUST BE PLOWED TO THE CURB AND AS A RESULT DRIVEWAYS GET BLOCKED WITH THE WET, HEAVY SNOW FROM THE PLOW. IT IS THE PROPERTY OWNER’S RESPONSIBILITY TO CLEAR THE SNOW FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE DRIVEWAY AND AROUND THE MAILBOX.

CONTACT US

QUESTIONS, COMPLAINTS, OR COMPLIMENTS REGARDING SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL ON CITY STREETS OR SIDEWALKS THAT ARE NOT SHOVELD SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AT 748-4909.