



City of Dayton Snow Plowing and Ice Control Policy

Revised September 2023

Introduction the City of Dayton, Minnesota, finds that it is in the best interest of the residents of the city to assume basic responsibility for control of snow and ice on city streets. Reasonable ice and snow control is necessary for routine travel and emergency services. The City will attempt to provide such control in a safe and cost-effective manner, keeping in mind safety, budget, personnel and environmental concerns. The city will use city employees, equipment and/or private contractors to provide this service. This policy does not relieve the operator of private vehicles, pedestrians, property owners, residents, and all others that may be using public streets, of their responsibility to act in a reasonable, prudent and cautious manner, given the prevailing street conditions.

When will the City start snow or ice control operations? The street superintendent will decide when to begin snow or ice control operations. The criteria for that decision are:

- A Snow accumulation of 2 inches or more
- B Drifting of snow that causes problems for travel
- C Icy conditions which seriously affect travel
- D Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use streets

Snow and ice control operations are expensive and involve the use of limited personnel and equipment. Consequently snowplowing operations will generally not be conducted for snowfall of less than 2 inches. Plowing will begin as close as practicable to the time the snowfall ceases; however every effort will be made to have main routes plowed and sanded prior to morning or afternoon rush hour.

How snow will be plowed: Snow will be plowed in a manner so as to minimize traffic obstructions. Snow on cul-de-sacs will normally be plowed to the center in an attempt to provide the largest turning radius possible, for emergency vehicle entry and exit. In times of extreme snowfall, streets will not always immediately be completely cleared of snow. Because of different storm situations and severity levels, starting times may vary.

Snow removal: The street superintendent will determine if and when snow will be removed from the area by truck. Such snow removal will occur in areas where there is no room on the boulevard for snow storage and in areas where accumulated piles of snow create a hazardous condition. Snow removal operations will not commence until other snowplowing operations have been completed. Snow removal operations may also be delayed depending on weather conditions, personnel and budget availability. The snow will be removed and hauled to a snow storage area. The snow storage area will be located so as to minimize environmental problems.

Priorities and schedule of streets to be plowed: The city has classified streets based on the street functions, traffic volume and importance to the welfare of the community. Those streets classified as "arterial routes" will be plowed first, these are high volume routes, which connect major sections of the city and provide access for emergency fire, police and medical services. The second priority streets are high volume residential streets, those streets providing access to schools and commercial businesses. The

third priority streets are low volume residential streets. The fourth priority areas are city parking lots, trails and cul-de-sac clean up.

During significant and severe storms, the city must be prepared to move personnel and equipment to maintain priority routes first. In fulfilling the need to have all priority streets safe and passable, when resources are limited, plowing of all other streets may be stopped at any time so resources can be shifted to priority routes.

Unforeseeable circumstances may cause delays in completing assigned plow routes. Such circumstances may include weather conditions that endanger the safety of snowplow operators and/or safe and effective operation of equipment, commuter traffic, disabled vehicles, poor visibility conditions, parked cars along streets, assistance to emergency response vehicles, equipment breakdowns and personnel shortages.

Work schedule for snowplow Operators: Snowplow operators will be expected to work their assigned shifts. In severe snow emergencies, operators sometimes have to work longer shifts, but will be paid overtime for hours in excess of 40 per week, or pursuant to any collective bargaining contract language. However, because of budget and safety concerns, no operator shall work more than a twelve hour shift in any twenty-four hour period. While work breaks are not guaranteed, generally operators will take breaks in accordance with city policy, provided the breaks do not interfere with city services or operations. In addition, operators will be allowed sufficient time to eat a meal during any shift which is eight or more hours, or as provided in the collective bargaining agreement. After a twelve-hour shift, the operators will be replaced if additional qualified personnel are available.

Traffic regulations: The City recognizes that snowplow operators are exempt from traffic regulations set forth in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 169 while actually engaged in work on streets, except for regulations related to driving while impaired and the safety of school children. Pursuant to this authority, snowplow operators engaged in snow removal or ice control on city streets have discretion to disregard traffic laws set forth in Chapter 169, except for laws relating to impaired driving and school children safety, when in their judgment, it is safe to disregard such laws. The privileges granted herein to operators of snow removal and ice control vehicles shall apply only if the vehicle is equipped with one lighted lamp displaying a flashing, oscillation or rotating amber light placed in such a position on the vehicle as to be visible throughout an arc of 360 degree.

Vehicle parking: Following any snowfall between the dates of November 1 of each year to April 1 of the following year, it shall be unlawful to park or leave standing any vehicle or part thereof on any City street from 2.00 am until such time as snow plowing curb to curb has been completed. 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.

Weather conditions: Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of snowplow operators and equipment. Factors that may delay snow and ice control operations include: severe cold, significant winds, and limited visibility.

Use of Sand, Salt 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 effect of such chemicals on the environment and will limit its use for that reason.

Sidewalks: The city will maintain some of the sidewalks in the city. As there are a limited number of personnel available, the city will only maintain these sidewalks after the streets have been plowed. It is the responsibility of the resident and/or property owner to remove all accumulated snow from all other sidewalks along public streets adjoining their property. This includes any snow plowed from the public streets onto the sidewalk.

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.

Minnesota Highway Traffic Regulations:

160.27 Sub (5) Misdemeanors: It shall be unlawful to obstruct any highway or to deposit snow or ice thereon.

169.42 Sub (1). No person shall throw, deposit, place, or dump upon any Street or highway, any snow, ice, etc.

Resident responsibilities: These include clearing their own driveways, clearing areas for trashcans, clearing around mailboxes and newspaper delivery tubes. Trash cans must not be placed on the street surfaces. The City will not clear private driveways.

Snow plowing can cause additional snow to be deposited in driveway approaches and around roadside obstacles. Operators are instructed to attempt to minimize these instances; however, it is not practical to eliminate this situation. Residents should be aware they may have to clear their driveways a second time after their street has been plowed.

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 to 15 feet beyond the curb. The intent of the right-of-way is to provide 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.

Mailboxes: Damage to a mailbox is a risk that snowplow operators face during their winter plowing requirements. The city will conduct a review of each mailbox damage claim to determine whether the city has any legal responsibility for the damage and if so, to replace or provide reimbursement for the mailbox. If it is determined that the damage is caused by impact of snow from the snow removal equipment a reimbursement up to \$100 will be provided to the homeowner. If the damage is determined to be from direct contact with snow removal equipment the full cost for replacement will be provided to the homeowner. Any claim must be accompanied by a receipt for replacement of the damaged items. Damage caused to property by equipment other than City operated equipment will not qualify for reimbursement or replacement.

If the city, in its discretion, determines that reimbursement or replacement is appropriate, the city may:

1. At the mailbox owners request, replace the mailbox with a standard size, non-decorative metal mailbox and replace the support post as necessary with a 4' x 4', decay resistant wood support post, which will be installed by the city;
2. Provide reimbursement in a reasonable amount for the mailbox and support posts that meet the city's ordinance standards, as well as state and federal requirements for mailbox size, support and placement.

To be properly placed, a mailbox should be installed so its bottom edge is 45" to 47" above street level, with the post 36" back from the curb or front of the box. That amount of clearance is needed to keep the plow's wing from hitting the box. If there are any plastic newspaper tubes attached to the mailbox, they must be above 45" height requirement. The box's post should be securely in the ground.

Complaint procedure: Complaints will be recorded on telephone logs. Calls requiring service will be transferred to a work request and forwarded to the appropriate supervisor for scheduling. Emergency complaints will be handled in an expeditious manner as resources are available.

Deviation from policy: The Superintendent of streets may deviate from this policy when in his or her judgment it is in the best interest of the city or is necessary because of budget needs or other circumstances. Changes in priorities (lasting more than 4 hours) will be documented as to what caused such actions, why the change was necessary, and for how long the change is to be in effect. Those city employees and/or contractors affected will be notified immediately by radio or cell phone of such changes with all communications logged. Information logged will include the time and date of the communication, name of employee contacted, and how they were contacted. Any changes of priorities lasting more than 24 hours should be made in a written record and the public should be informed of such changes through normal methods used by the city for emergency notifications.

Review and modification of policy: The Street Superintendent shall keep on file all comments and complaints received regarding this policy. The policy will be reviewed periodically. Any review will consider comments and complaints since the last review and any other factors affecting the policy or its implementation.

Guidelines for Operators:

1. Operators will be required to be on stand-by and able to report to work within one hour notice from November 1st to March 31st unless arrangements are made with the Maintenance Supervisor or designated representative.
2. Operators will be responsible for the vehicle they are assigned to. This includes completing a daily maintenance and equipment check before and after each shift and reporting all deficiencies to the Maintenance Supervisor. During snowplowing operations any and all downtime or breakdowns will be reported to the Maintenance Supervisor or designated representative.
3. No snow removal vehicles shall be parked with less than three-quarters of a tank of fuel.
4. Operators shall not assist stranded vehicles by pushing, pulling or jump-starting with City equipment. Operators may assist by calling for help, offering sand, or offering a helping hand.
5. To minimize damage, no equipment will exceed twenty miles per hour in residential areas.
6. Operators will report all damage to the Maintenance Supervisor or designated representative at the end of each shift.
7. When plowing and sanding is completed after each storm, salt/sand should be emptied from all trucks and all equipment should be cleaned and washed.
8. When the operator has completed their assigned route, they will contact the Maintenance Supervisor or designated representative.

9. Before leaving duty at the end of the shift every effort should be made to contact the Maintenance Supervisor or designated representative.
10. No plowing of private property or towing of vehicles will be permitted unless it directly affects traffic. Any questions should be directed to the Maintenance Supervisor. Every effort will be made not to damage mailboxes and trash containers or other structures in the right-of-way.

Accidents during snow clearance operations: All accidents during snowplow operations should be reported to the Maintenance Supervisor. If the accident involves a vehicle or a personal injury, immediately contact the Sheriff's Department and then contact the Maintenance Supervisor. Remain at the scene until an accident report has been completed. The policies and procedures relating to the drug and alcohol testing for commercial vehicle drivers shall be implemented in this situation.