



POLICY

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Amended: October 10, 2017

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Amended: December 19, 2016

Amended: October 22, 2018

Amended: October 11, 2022

POLICY TITLE: Snow and Ice Control

POLICY NUMBER: 31-009

POLICY PURPOSE:

To provide Town staff with direction in control of snow and ice.

Objectives:

- a. To ensure motorists and pedestrians are able to travel safely and with reasonable ease under winter conditions.
- b. To provide for the operation of essential services, including fire, police, ambulance and Town utilities.
- c. To ensure that low volume roadways and lanes do not become impassable.

POLICY:

General

1. Road and walk maintenance priorities are established to provide the greatest benefit to the greatest number of the public.
2. When storms are continuous, or follow closely one after the other, operations will be repeated or continued on the highest priority until completed before moving on to the next priority.
3. Snow and ice control activities are generally carried out from October through April. Following the first snowfall, operational hours are from 5:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., on regular workdays. Town forces are on standby on a 24-hour basis, seven days per week, during the winter.
4. As weather conditions dictate, Infrastructure Services will decide when and to what extent, overtime, additional Town and outside forces are to be utilized.



5. The Town of Whitecourt will utilize a variety of communication mediums, including website and social media sites, to inform the general public of snow and ice control procedures, activities, and schedules.

Priority Routes

6. Operations for plowing will be conducted in accordance to the priorities as indicated in Schedule "A" – Route Priorities.
7. Generally, priority is given on the following basis:
 - a) First priority - major arterial and collector roadways, to give good access to within a few blocks of most areas.
 - b) Second priority - downtown business district, to allow owners time in advance to clean adjacent sidewalks.
 - c) Third priority - Whitecourt Transit bus routes.
 - d) Fourth priority - residential or local roadways and areas of special consideration that are at risk for spring thaw and flooding.
 - e) Fifth priority - industrial roads, due to the nature of the traffic and occupancy type.
 - f) Lanes are only done when conditions become almost impassable, considering also the narrow width and impacts on operations.
 - g) Fire hydrants, accesses to essential service areas or facilities, public use areas and buildings, and public parking lots, will be done in conjunction with other priority areas as deemed necessary by Infrastructure Services. Roadways without designated priorities or requiring special attention will be done as deemed necessary by the Infrastructure Services Department.

Review

8. Unless overriding circumstances do not permit, roadways will be reviewed by the Manager of Works, or designate, as time permits as follows:
 - a. Within two (2) hours of receipt of a complaint.
 - b. Within eight (8) hours of the start of precipitation.
 - c. Within twelve (12) hours of the end of precipitation that exceeds 2.5 millimetres of rain or 25 millimeters of snow.
 - d. In the order of priority set above.

Maintenance Standards

9. All roads open for winter use will be maintained in order of priority to allow travel under control at or above 40% of the posted speed limit. Road conditions will be evaluated using a front wheel drive sedan equipped with snow tires for residential and commercial streets, and a two-wheel drive pickup with snow tires on industrial streets.
 - a) Level 1 Work
 - All roads will be maintained to allow travel at or above 40% of the posted speed limit, in the order of priority.



- All available resources will be assigned, with overtime if required.
 - b) Level 2 Work
 - First and third priority roads will be maintained to allow travel at or above 60% of the posted speed limit.
 - Main walkways will be maintained.
 - All available resources will be assigned with overtime if required.
 - c) Level 3 Work
 - Public facilities will be maintained, including sidewalks if not previously done.
 - Hydrants will be cleared.
 - Work will proceed with regular resources within normal operating hours.
 - d) Level 4 Work
 - First priority roads will be maintained to allow travel at or above 80% of the posted speed limit.
 - Second priority roads will be maintained to allow travel at or above 60% of the posted speed limit.
 - e) Level 5 Work
 - Remaining roads will be maintained to allow travel at or above 60% of the posted speed limit.
 - Second priority roads will be maintained to allow travel at or above 80% of the posted speed limit.
 - Snow piles and windrows will be reduced in height or removed.
10. When social or recreational events of community importance would be adversely affected by snow or ice conditions, affected facilities will be brought to a Level 2 standard provided all first priority areas have been brought to Level 1. (Includes events such as Remembrance Day, funerals, parades, Rotary Park skating events, or other events of community wide importance as designated by Council.)

Ice Control

11. Sanding operations are carried out as required between 5:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on weekdays. Additional sanding will be done as determined by Infrastructure Services based upon prevailing winter conditions. Town forces are on standby on a 24-hour basis for seven days per week.
12. Sanding material is winter sand classification 5. De-icing material is standard fine road salt.
13. De-icers are used only during active temperature conditions. Road salt is mixed with sanding material at varying rates depending on temperature conditions.



14. Ice control is conducted along priority routes and in the downtown business area. It is restricted to intersections, highway approaches and corners and is not normally applied to mid-block areas, unless conditions warrant otherwise.

Snow Plowing:

15. First priority routes will be plowed as close to the road surface as is practical before snow depth exceeds 10 centimetres. Snow will be left on all other roadways and lanes in varying depths. Snow will be plowed to one or both sides of roads, depending on pending removal, sidewalks, boulevards, and land use.
16. In residential areas, snow will be plowed:
 - a. onto the boulevard on the side of the street without a sidewalk, or
 - b. onto boulevards on both sides if the sidewalks are away from the road, or
 - c. onto the sidewalk on one side of the road. The sidewalk that is plowed onto will alternate each snow season, with exceptions being made on school bus routes, streets with sidewalks on only one side, crescents and cul-de-sacs. Reference Schedule "B" – Directional Movement.
17. During spring break-up or warmer weather, roadways may be plowed and/or have snow removed to minimize driving difficulty and drainage problems.
18. Sidewalks at Town owned buildings that provide municipal services will be cleared within 48 hours of the end of snowfall.
19. Driveway or lane windrows greater than 30 centimetres in depth shall be removed within a reasonable time period (within two hours of being placed if possible).
20. Driveways shall be cleared of windrows to a maximum width of 6.0 metres. Town forces will clear two driveway accesses for non-residential properties, one driveway access for residential properties.
21. Where a property does not have a street fronting driveway access, windrows over 30 centimetres in height on public sidewalks shall have a sidewalk opening cleared in conjunction with Level Four Work.
22. In newly developed subdivisions, where pavement has not been completed and a construction completion certificate has not been issued, snow removal will not be maintained by the Town and will be the responsibility of the developer.

Snow Removal

23. Snow removal will commence when sufficient snow has accumulated on routes as designated on the map.
24. Snow will be plowed into windrows onto the centre of the roadway, loaded into trucks and hauled to designated dumpsite locations.



25. Where parking may interfere with snow removal, “No Parking” signs will be placed 24 hours in advance of snow removal operations and removed once routes are completed.
26. Removal on other roadways will be undertaken at the discretion of Infrastructure Services, to minimize driving difficulties and to maintain drainage.
27. In consideration of school pedestrian and bus/vehicle traffic, the loading and transportation of snow should not take place on roadways between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., or 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. while school is in session unless authorized by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Snow Disposal Sites

28. Sites are provided to store snow removed by Town forces and are only available for Town storage purposes.
29. Maintenance is done at each site based on dumping demands.
30. All sites are maintained in a fashion that will provide adequate drainage upon melting and minimize environmental impact on the surrounding area.

Best Practices

31. The following “best practices” do not constitute part of the policy but reflect the general standard and intention of work to be performed, and will be followed when weather conditions and time permits:
 - a) Public sidewalks and paved pathways under the Town’s control should be cleared to their full width to a level surface.
 - b) If rain or snow melt has created a layer of ice on sidewalks or walkways such that removal is difficult, the ice layer may be sanded, treated with de-icers, closed, or allowed to have a level firm snow layer established above the ice level to permit pedestrian use.
 - c) When possible, snow windrows or piles placed by the Town at intersections and school bus stop locations which obstruct visibility for safety of vehicles and pedestrians shall be lowered by the Town by removing the snow or pushing it beyond the sidewalk within Level 5 Work as outlined in Point 9 of this policy.
 - d) Where snow piles or windrows placed by a property owner adjacent to a roadway are such that snow clearing by the Town would result in the windrow or pile obstructing visibility for the safety of vehicles and pedestrians, the Town should have the property owner address the situation.



Town of Whitecourt

Policy Manual

Section: **Roads, Streets, Walks and Lighting**

- e) Recreation facilities should be made accessible prior to weekends or holidays, and maintained on weekends or holidays if significant snow accumulates and Level 2 work is complete.

REFERENCE:

Schedule "A" Route Priorities

Schedule "B" Directional Movement