

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL POLICY

December, 2015

INTRODUCTION - The control of accumulations of snow and ice on the public ways of the Town of Milton is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works. Snow and ice control is emergency work and shall be accomplished as efficiently and quickly as possible with the resources available to Town government. Many factors interact to make the effects of each snow or ice event unique. Consequently, the snow and ice control plan for the Town must be flexible enough to cope with and respond to varying conditions during and after each winter storm.

JURISDICTION - Responsibility for snow removal along streets within the Town of Milton shared by three principal parties: MassDOT, Mass DCR, and the Town of Milton Department of Public Works.

- MassDOT is responsible for snow fighting on streets and sidewalks along the following routes:
 - Randolph Avenue (Route 28) - from Reedsdale Road southerly to the Quincy city line (south of Chickatawbut Road).
 - Granite Avenue – from Wood Street to the Boston city line (at the Neponset Bridge).
 - Squantum Street – from Adams Street easterly to Granite Avenue.
 - The Southeast Expressway and all of the ramps to and from the Expressway.
 - Blue Hill Avenue – from Mattapan Square southerly to the Canton town line.

- Mass DCR is responsible for snow fighting on streets and sidewalks along the following routes:
 - Blue Hills Parkway.
 - Neponset Valley Parkway.
 - Truman Highway.
 - Chickatawbut Road.
 - Hillside Street – from Canton town line to Hillside Pond.
 - Unquity Road.
 - Blue Hill River Road

- Town of Milton is responsible for all other roadways with the Town boundaries.

GENERAL - The following is a general description of how the Department of Public Works plows snow from Town streets. Details are contained in this policy manual.

Step 1 – Long before a storm begins, DPW management monitors the development of winter weather systems using local network news, NOAA/NWS, MEMA/FEMA, and subscription weather services. Given any storms progression, decisions are made to begin to prepare and ready equipment, personnel, and contact equipment operators. Given the forecasted storm

intensity and timing, the Town Administrator and the Superintendent of the Milton School Department are briefed so that good decisions may be made to declare a winter snow emergency and/or alter the school schedule.

Step 2 - When a snow storm begins, the DPW responds by pretreating the main roads. Pretreatment utilizes salt, or a salt/liquid calcium chloride mix, depending on air and roadway temperatures and accumulation forecasts. (Note - Sand has no snow/ice melting capability. However, small amounts of sand are blended into salt mixes ONLY as a “tracer” to provide a visual indicator to the public that the roadway has been treated. After all main roads are treated, pretreatment operations move into collector and secondary/collector roads. Pretreatment of roadways serves two purposes: to keep traffic moving, and to prevent the snow from bonding to the pavement. Pretreatment to local neighborhood roads is rarely applied. Pretreatment to private ways is never applied.

Step 3 - Snow plowing begins when snow accumulates three (3) inches and when additional accumulation is forecasted. During full winter weather fighting operations over 50 Town and private plows can be called out and assigned to plow pre-determined routes. The Town’s policy is to plow the full width of the street, curb to curb, during each storm.

Step 4 - Once snowfall has stopped and plowing is winding down, salt trucks begin post-storm salting.

- Main streets, bus routes, emergency apparatus corridors are salted to achieve bare pavement conditions.
- Residential streets with hills are sanded and salted to improve traction.
- Flat local neighborhood streets are sanded only if icy conditions exist and traction compromises safety. “Bare and black” roadway surfaces on local neighborhood streets should not be expected.

Because of the high cost associated with removal of plowed snow, large snow piles will be removed only when necessary from streets and municipal parking lots in the business district areas and near schools where safety is compromised by any piled snow. Snow accumulations may also be removed from heavily traveled streets as time and budget constraints permit. Any removal operations performed on streets are for the purpose of facilitating the safe and proper flow of vehicular traffic only.

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL OPERATIONS - During a winter storm, Town plow/spreader equipment will be dispatched when necessary to plow and treat Milton’s streets. Trucks shall be assigned to one of twenty-eight (28) routes into which the Town is partitioned. If snowfall is expected to be in excess of four (4) inches, the DPW will call private contractors to supplement its own crews. These plows will first clear the primary streets (“main lines”). After those streets are open for vehicular traffic, the plows will then clear all remaining streets (“side streets”) listed on the twenty-eight (28) general plow route maps. The DPW’s objective goal is to have all improved streets cleared for vehicular travel within twenty-four (24) hours of the end of a winter storm.

Within snow zones and routes, primary streets will be plowed and treated continuously until they are open for vehicular traffic. Then the secondary streets will be plowed and treated. Finally, all other streets in each route will be opened for vehicular travel. This prioritization is used with each continuing plowing cycle. Each plowing cycle takes approximately 3 hours to complete. Every road should see at least one plow pass every three hours (some roads more frequently as the need presents).

CALL LISTS and PREPARATION - The success of the overall operation is based on the availability of appropriate staff, preceding and during snow removal activities. Between the months of November and April, Milton is subject to rapidly changing weather patterns. Because severe winter storms may occur during these months, management may alter the work schedules of employees as conditions dictate. Management will make every attempt to notify employees and contractors of the possibility of anticipated storms. With advance warning, it is the employee's and contractor's responsibility to make arrangements to be available as needed for snow removal.

A call list shall be completed and distributed by November 1st each year. The list will state:

1. Names and phone numbers of Town snow and ice control personnel;
2. Names and cell phone numbers of snow and ice control contractors;
3. Routes to which all personnel are typically assigned; and
4. Names and phone numbers of salt, liquid calcium chloride, sand supplier.

SNOW WARNING AND ALERTING PROCEDURE - The DPW shall monitor all of its weather services and commercial weather forecasting services during the winter storm season. When snow or ice conditions develop between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., the DPW will directly make any determination as to the commencing of snow fighting operations. When snow or ice conditions develop between 3:30 p.m. and 7 a.m., the Police Department shall alert the DPW Operations Director as to any roadway condition deterioration that may occur during the overnight time period.

TRUCK PLOW/SPREADER OPERATIONS - As soon as conditions warrant, as determined by the DPW Operations Director, the DPW plow/spreader truck operators are dispatched onto their routes. The Operations Director determines what types of materials will be spread on Milton's streets and whether to use only Town forces or to call in contractor forces for pre-treatment operations. His decision is based on variables such as air temperature, pavement temperature, type of precipitation, wind, and forecasted post-storm air temperatures.

After an initial surface salt-treatment, operations will then shift over to plowing. Plowing is typically warranted once snow accumulations on streets exceed one (1) inch in average depth and the forecast calls for additional snowfall to continue. Plow operators make the final determination that additional salt may be needed, which will cause spot treatment of salt being applied by the last truck in the plow line.

Bridges and steep hills will be checked for frost or slippery conditions when appropriate. If frost is present, salt or sand will be spread to increase traction.

PUBLIC SALT/SAND PILE - For the convenience of the public, the DPW provides a pile of sand/salt mixed material at the DPW Yard at 629 Randolph Avenue. Milton residents are welcome to take reasonable quantities (not more than two 5 gallon buckets at a time) of this material for their use. Residents are responsible for providing their own vehicle and bucket. The DPW yard is open and material is available Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. All residents must check-in at the Headquarters Office before going to the material pile.

SNOW PLOW OPERATIONS – All snow fighting operations are prioritized in a deliberate, effective and emergency/vulnerability basis. The DPW maintains constant communication with Milton’s dispatch centers for police, fire, and ambulance services. In the event of the need for any emergency response by any of these agencies, the DPW redirects snow fighting equipment along the response route to clear the way ahead of emergency apparatus.

Roadways are treated in the same manner at the outset of every storm. Adjustments to the method of attack of roadway plow sequences, apparatus assignment, and material use **WILL** differ given the dynamic circumstances of a natural storm event. Adjustments and not only possible but are expected. The following is a general description of how the Department of Public Works prioritizes snow fighting operation on town roadways:

1. Arterial Roadways, and Emergency Response Corridors;
2. Large Collector Roads;
3. Neighborhood Collector Roads;
4. Local Neighborhood Roads;
5. Cul-de-Sacs and Dead ends;
6. School Driveways and Parking Lots;
7. Private Ways and;
8. Sidewalks; and
9. Snow Removal in Business Districts (when necessary and only during extreme winter conditions).

If snowfall accumulations are in excess of six (6) inches on street surfaces and extended snow conditions persist, plow-equipped front-end-loaders are usually dispatched to assist with regular plow-truck operations. These large plows will first clear the primary streets (i.e., “main lines”). After those streets are open for vehicular traffic, the plows will then be dispatched to clear the collector roads shown on plow route maps.

CUL-DE-SAC’S, PRIVATE WAYS AND DEAD-END STREETS - The Town incurs proportionally more time and costs clearing snow from cul-de-sacs, private ways and dead ends than on typical “uninterrupted” stretches of Town streets.

Care and maintenance of private ways are the responsibility of those owners who have rights in the way. The Town of Milton has no legal obligation to maintain private ways. The Town also has no legal obligation to remove snow from any unaccepted or private way. However, in the interest of heightened public safety, the Town of Milton has traditionally plowed some private ways. The “normal condition” of a private way dictates the success or degree of difficulty posed

on snow plowing operations. Private ways that are in rutted, uneven, or deteriorated condition present a much heightened risk for severe damage to plow equipment and nearly always result in less than favorable plow results. From time to time the gravel surface in some private ways deteriorates severely, making vehicular passage difficult, and can greatly hinder snow plowing operations. It is current policy that, in those instances, the Town may provide limited grading of the roadway surface so as to limit damage to our own plow equipment. In severe circumstances, snow plowing operations may be discontinued. The Town will continue to plow those private ways that we have plowed since 2010. No additional private ways, whether existing or proposed, will be added to the town's snow plowing list. The Town of Milton currently intends to continue that this practice.

PUBLIC SIDEWALKS - The DPW clears snow from a predetermined number of sidewalks. These sidewalks are typically located along high volume streets in areas near schools. In support of minimizing scheduling impacts to the School Department, and exercising a careful balance of driver and pedestrian safety, these sidewalks are cleared after all roadways are opened and determined to be in a serviceable state. A great many factors play into which sidewalks get plowed by the Town, and which do not. These factors include sidewalk width, obstructions, pedestrian traffic vehicular traffic. In severe winter storms the Town may, from time to time, alter sidewalk clearing efforts.

The Town of Milton does not have a Bylaw requiring property owners to clear snow from the sidewalk abutting their property. However, recent case law has resulted in property owners taking on personal liability in circumstances where injury occurs on public sidewalks in front of private property. Property owners should remove snow from the sidewalk along their frontage and heighten safety to their own property.

CATCH BASINS - Storm water catch basins located in key drainage areas will be opened within a reasonable time following snowfalls, if temperatures over 32 degrees Fahrenheit are expected soon thereafter. Timing will depend to a great extent upon short-range weather forecasts.

SNOW AND ICE LOADOUT/REMOVAL OPERATIONS - Because of the high costs associated with removal operations, snow piles will be removed only when necessary from streets and municipal parking lots in the business district areas. Snow accumulations may also be removed from heavily-traveled streets, as time and budget constraints permit. Any removal operations performed on streets are for the sole purpose of facilitating the safe and proper flow of vehicular traffic.

Snow removal operations in the business district areas shall generally be performed at night in order to avoid heavy traffic and congested parking. Snow removal operations on other streets shall generally be performed during the day in order to accommodate the residents on those streets. Rotary snow blowers, front end loaders, motor graders, backhoe-loaders, and dump trucks shall be used for such operations. Private equipment and operators may be hired to assist, but only when deemed necessary.

NOTIFICATIONS - There is but one official source for the dissemination of Milton storm-related information. **Use of unofficial social media outlets has proven to be highly unreliable. These outlets are almost always the source of incorrect information written by non-official parties.** Reliable information is contained on www.townofmilton.org or on the Milton Department of Public Works Facebook page. The DPW also issues press releases and periodic updates through the Milton School Department email blast network, Milton Community Access Television, and local newspapers. All information broadcast through these outlets is always contained on www.townofmilton.org, thus verifying its authenticity. From time to time the Town may use contract automated calling services to disseminate important and up to date storm information. Under extreme circumstances, a Reverse 911 call system may be used to disseminate urgent emergency information. Please understand that homes without a land-based telephone line will not receive automated calls. Mobile telephone users can subscribe to receive reverse 911 calls. However, these capabilities vary with each service provider. Citizens without land-based telephone in their homes are encouraged to subscribe to reverse 911 services.

REPORTS OF PROBLEMS OR ISSUES - There is but one official means for the reporting of problems or issues with snow operations.

Reporting of any storm related matter, problem or issue via social media is very unreliable. The Town does not and cannot monitor social media. One has to assume that any report made through social media failed to reach operational staff and will not be addressed.

To be official and to be certain that every report has been properly received and directed it is essential that all reports are made only through the following two means:

- Use the [Report a Problem link](#) found of the [Town of Milton web page](#). The [Report a Problem Snow and Ice Issues](#) form allows residents to quickly report issues directly to our DPW Operations. There is **NO NEED** to call or visit the DPW Offices if you use this form. If an e-mail address is provided residents will receive a confirmation e-mail reply back from DPW stating that your request has been received and entered into our operational management system. During storm events this system is continuously monitored and crews are dispatched as quickly and efficiently as possible. With this system we are able to track and map all reports, monitor DPW Operational responses and quickly determine when issues have been resolved.
- Telephone - Snow Operations Headquarters – 617-898-4900 and press 2 at the prompt.
 - DPW telephones are fully covered at all times between the hours of 7:30 am and 4:00 pm Monday through Friday (Normal Working Hours).
 - During severe storms DPW telephone coverage is extended beyond normal working hours.

- The Department's goal is to have an employee answer every telephone call. However, under severe weather events this is not always possible.
- A call is re-directed to voicemail only due to the fact that all covering phone lines are busy with other reports.
 - The storm event voicemail message account is monitored regularly and frequently. All reports received via voicemail are entered into the Department's operational management software where they are evaluated, prioritized, assigned, and tracked.

- Citizens making reports via voicemail are encouraged to include their email address if they have one. By including an email address, all reports made will receive an email response.
- The Department will make its best attempt to return calls left on the voicemail service. However, during severe storms and at times of high call volume a return call is not always possible.
- Multiple calls made by the same party for the same reason will be logged and acknowledged but once. Return calls for the second and any subsequent call made by the same party about the same issue will not be returned.

Call volume during the height of snow operations is typically very high. It is very likely that you will not reach a live person and will need to leave a message. Residents should rest assured that ALL messages are listened to and reports are received, logged, prioritized (according to the ongoing and overall operational mission), assigned, and tracked. During the height of operations it is very likely that a return call is not possible. Repeated calls by the same party show up on the storm log as redundant and result in tying up critically important communication lines and resources.

SOLID WASTE COLLECTION - The solid waste collection schedule is generally not affected by snow events. Regular trash and recycling collection will take place on the scheduled day. During snow storms, residents should place items to be collected on flat ground (in the driveway is best). Containers should not be placed in the gutter, as passing plows will disrupt the container, spilling the contents all about. If extreme circumstances exist an official notice will be issued by the DPW stating what any trash collection changes are.

PRECAUTIONS!

- Residents should obey all travel bans and parking bans and recognize that plow equipment is very large and very heavy. Plow equipment does not maneuver or respond like a passenger car; they cannot steer and stop as efficiently. Drivers should stay 200 feet behind any snowplow. Visibility is not good for the snowplow operator. The speed of a snowplow is only 15-22 m.p.h.
- Plow operators have a very important, stressful, and tiresome job to perform. Residents should not engage in any confrontational actions. Throwing shovels, standing in the path of oncoming plows, throwing of snow or other objects are dangerous. Residents should not jump in front of plows to get the operator's attention. Plow operators are directed to immediately report such actions to the Police Department.
- Horseplay in or near snow banks is extremely dangerous. Children can slip into the path of oncoming traffic or suffer injury by buried snow. Please use common sense.
- Runners/Joggers should refrain from running in the street or gutters during plow operation times. Wearing reflective clothing or flashing lights does not provide any measure of safety to use public roadways for exercise at any time. The risk is magnified tremendously when roadways are used for exercise during snow events. Please use common sense.

GOOD NEIGHBORS POLICY - In the interest of your and your neighbor's personal safety, please shovel out nearby fire hydrants. Please keep nearby catch basins clear of snow or ice to prevent street flooding during heavy rains or snow melting periods. Check in with neighbors from time to time to see if everything is well. The Town will look into establishing a shoveling assistance program, through the Council on Aging and the School Department, to assist the elderly and those not capable to handle winter storms on their own.

RESIDENTIAL DRIVEWAYS - One of the most frequent and disliked results of the Town's removal of snow from public streets is snow being deposited in residential driveways during plowing operations. As plows travel along streets, the snow accumulated on the plow blade has no place to go but on the adjacent streets and in driveways. Snowplow operators shall make every attempt to minimize the amount of snow deposited in driveways, but the amount can still be significant. The more snow that has fallen, the greater the problem will be. There are two tricks that can be used to minimize the frustrating effect of having the driveway repeatedly plowed in:

- Save opening up the end of the driveway until after the storm ends and the street is relatively clear. This will effectively reduce the total weight of the snow shoveled and likely require that you shovel only once.
- Shovel the snow from the driveway and pile it **on the right side as you face the street**, in lieu of placing it on both sides at the end of the driveways. Doing this will help snowplow drivers avoid carrying piles from the other side back across driveways. Town personnel do not provide driveway cleaning.

PRIVATE PROPERTY ON PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY - Remove all basketball hoops, hockey nets, toys, landscape plants and/or ornamentation from the public way before November 15th. These items are not allowed on public property at any time, but during winter months the prohibition is strictly enforced. These items greatly narrow the effective plowed width of the roadway. They also cause damage to plow equipment and injury to plow operators. In order to facilitate snow plowing and removal operations, any private property placed on the public right of way will be removed and disposed of by the DPW without the owner having any recourse to the Town for any reimbursement. The Town reserves the right to issue fines to property owners in accordance with Town Bylaws.

Plow Damage - The Town is not responsible for damaged lawns, sprinkler heads, fences, steps, trees or shrubs that are located within or overhang the public way. The Town will investigate its responsibility for mailboxes that are physically hit by any plow that is working on behalf of the Town. However, mailboxes will not be repaired if they are in a deteriorated condition or are damaged by snow pushback. Mailboxes and posts damaged by a snowplow will be fixed and/or replaced by the Town with a standard wooden post and black box. The Town will not accept any financial liability or provide compensation for any specialty mailbox and/or post that cannot be repaired.

All plow damage must be reported to the Public Works Department by May 1st of the current snow and ice season. Damage reported after May 1st will not be considered for repairs or

reimbursement by the Town of Milton. Residents are urged to place stakes with reflectors along the edge of lawns and the corner of driveways / walkways.

No Snow Deposited in Public Way - A Town By-law prohibits the depositing of snow or ice onto or across any public way, including sidewalks or public property. This By-law addresses the ongoing problem of private contractors plowing snow from private driveways into the public way. This practice causes unsafe road conditions which must then be corrected by the Public Works Department. Any such owner or agent violating this by-law shall be punished by a fine as well as any assignment of all costs incurred by the Public Works Department to correct the condition.

VEHICLE PARKING AND TOWING -

SNOW EMERGENCIES; VEHICLE PARKING AND TOWING.

A Town Bylaw authorizes the Director of Public Works or Officer in Charge of the Police Department, for the purpose of plowing or removing snow or ice from any public or private way, to remove or cause to be removed any motor vehicle interfering with snow emergency operation. The Bylaw also allows the Town to impose liability for the cost of removal and any resulting storage charges to the owner of the motor vehicle.

Cars that are parked in the driveway but extend into the sidewalk, grass strip, or street gutter areas, are, in fact, parked on the Public Way and are subject to citation and/or towing during snow removal operations.

DECLARATION OF SNOW EMERGRNCY - All of the measures stated herein shall apply during all winter weather events. During events where the weather forecast is severe or extraordinary the Director of Public Works will notify the Town Administrator and Superintendent of the Milton School Department and recommend that the Board of Selectmen issue a formal emergency declaration. All decisions relative to school closure, delayed opening, and/or early dismissal are made exclusively by the School Superintendent.

Emergency Declarations are ranked in the following order of supremacy:

- Federal State of Emergency outranks all statewide, countywide, and local emergency declarations.
- Statewide State of Emergency outranks all countywide, and local emergency declarations.
- Countywide State of Emergency (declared by MEMA by either a county by county or Regional (Milton being in Region 2) basis) outranks all local emergency declarations.
- Local State of Emergency.

Issuance of a local State of Emergency may include:

- Partial or complete closure of municipal offices, departments, and facilities.

- Authorize the DPW to use all local resources available and to coordinated for storm preparation and to enable swift response among the all municipal departments.
- Authorizes the expedited use of local resources as well as the ability to request and receive mutual aid assistance from other agencies, states, or the federal government if needed,
- Authorizes the DPW to make any and all immediate procurement and deployment of goods and services necessary for response and other actions as considered necessary.

The state of emergency shall remain in effect until notice is given that the local state of emergency is no longer necessary or is modified, suspended, or lifted.

DEPARTURE FROM POLICY - The Town of Milton recognizes that winter conditions vary from year to year and from storm to storm. Consequently, when conditions warrant, the Director of Public Works may order a departure from the snow and ice control and removal policies as stated in this manual in order to adjust to existing conditions.