

Snow & Ice Control Policies & Procedures

City of Lexington Public Works

I. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this manual is to establish an acceptable policy and operational procedures for snow and ice control on public streets under the jurisdiction of Lexington. This policy provides a uniform understanding of the priorities and procedures to be used to combat the accumulation of snow and ice on City streets.

OBJECTIVE

The objective is to provide adequate traction for vehicles properly equipped for winter driving conditions. Priority is given to streets which carry the largest traffic volume. Limited resources preclude service on lower priority streets until higher priority streets have been completed. It can be expected that during storms of high intensity or long duration, drivers on lower priority streets will encounter snow-packed or icy conditions. Snow and ice control operations will continue until all streets have clear pavement, or until plowing and salting are no longer effective. For questions regarding snow removal or other street related issues, please contact Lexington Public Works (LPW) at (731) 968-7091.

II. POLICIES

RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for implementing the snow and ice control policy lies with the Public Works Director or his designee. The Public Works Director will authorize the use of additional resources when conditions warrant.

TRAINING

Prior to the start of the snow season, the Public Works Director or his designee will conduct training for all personnel that will be involved in snow control activities. The training will consist of classroom training and hands-on equipment training including the operation of salters, snowplows, and front-end loaders. A “dry run” will be conducted for inexperienced drivers which will consist of driving the routes to familiarize the drivers with any obstructions they may encounter.

WEATHER MONITORING

The Public Works Director or his designee will use the National Weather Service daily forecast to monitor weather conditions and will be responsible for placing snowplow crews in “on-call status.”

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COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Whenever there is a danger of icy or snowy conditions on City roadways, the Public Works Director or his designee, will monitor conditions. After regular working hours, the Police Department will also report weather conditions to the Public Works Director or his designee as needed. Following a snow storm of two inch accumulation or greater, or in icy conditions, the Public Works Director or his designee will authorize commencement of plowing and/or salting operations.

PRIORITIES

A limited amount of resources and the need to provide the greatest safety and benefit to the traveling public in the most efficient manner necessitate that priority be given to certain streets above others. Streets with high intensity use have priority for snow removal service. Streets which require proportionally more time for snow removal have the lowest priority. (All State routes are controlled by the Tennessee Department of Transportation TDOT)

PRIORITY ONE: *Emergency Services (Fire/Police/EMS), Nursing Homes, Persons with medical conditions, & areas where traction problems are causing hazardous driving conditions such as hills, curves, stop signs, etc.*

PRIORITY TWO: *Arterial (ex: Main Street) and major collector (ex: Old Huntingdon Road) streets and Schools*

PRIORITY THREE: *Minor subdivision collector (ex: Teakwood) streets, residential through streets, Cul-de-sacs and other dead-end streets*

NO PRIORITY: *Private lanes and streets are not plowed by the City of Lexington*

CONTINUATION AND COMPLETION

Although no snow event is exactly the same, as a rule of thumb, it usually takes 12 hours **AFTER** the snow stops falling to plow and salt all Priority One streets. Priority Two streets generally take 24 hours to plow assuming no interruptions to move back to Priority One streets. Priority Three streets may be plowed within 36 hours after the snow stops.

During major storms, traffic on low priority streets usually cause the snow to become packed or icy before it can be plowed. In these cases, it may take days to remove the packed snow and ice from low-priority streets. When snow has become compacted on low priority streets and plowing is ineffective, salting and plowing operations may discontinue until regular working hours.

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SALTING

Salting is usually done in conjunction with plowing and has a similar priority system. Salting alone will be done when roads are icy or plowing is ineffective on snow-packed roads. The priority system for salting operations is as follows:

PRIORITY ONE: *Emergency Services (Fire/Police/EMS), Nursing Homes, Persons with medical conditions, & areas where traction problems are causing hazardous driving conditions such as hills, curves, stop signs, etc.*

PRIORITY TWO: *Arterial (ex: Main Street) and major collector (ex: Old Huntingdon Road) streets and Schools*

PRIORITY THREE: *Minor subdivision collector (ex: Teakwood) streets, residential through streets, Cul-de-sacs and other dead-end streets*

NO PRIORITY: *Private lanes and streets are not plowed by the City of Lexington*

Depending on the weather conditions, priority one & two routes may receive multiple applications along with other hazardous intersections or street inclines. Due to limited salt storage and delivery capacities, when more snow is predicted, salting may be halted on low priority streets to conserve salt for higher priority streets.

MATERIALS

For salting operations, straight salt will be used in different amounts depending on pavement temperature, air temperature and the amount of precipitation.

SALT STORAGE

The salt storage area at the City Public Works Facility has a capacity of approximately 25 tons. Salting operations to meet the demands of a major storm could consume this entire volume. Orders for salt delivery aren't regularly made to keep the storage facility full. The objective is to maintain the minimum amount of salt on hand at 5 tons.

CUL-DE-SACS

In an effort to become more efficient, crews will use the following standard as feasible for plowing snow in cul-de-sacs:

1. One full pass will be made around the perimeter of the cul-de-sac with a snowplow pushing the snow to the outside of the cul-de-sac and salting the center.
2. As time allows after a heavy storm, the snow will be plowed out of the center of the cul-de-sac and dispersed to the sides of the street.

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LOADING AND HAULING OF SNOW

Hauling of snow will only be done when there are no alternatives to keep streets open, to maintain access to adjacent properties, or under other special circumstances.

SOLID WASTE COLLECTION

Snow removal affects many City services, but none more than the collection of solid waste. For this reason, it is necessary to include in this policy procedures for coordinating solid waste collection services with snow removal plans.

Solid waste collection is normally unaffected by minor snow events. As accumulations of snow increase, storage of snow on curbs and shoulders may restrict or eliminate areas where garbage containers are normally placed. It may become unsafe, ineffective, or detrimental to snow removal efforts to continue regularly scheduled collection of solid waste. For major snow events and emergencies, the Public Works Director or his designee will coordinate continuing solid waste collection services. Solid waste collection may be suspended or postponed with the approval of the Public Works Director only.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Providing information to the public is a vital part of snow removal services. Residents need to know how they can help facilitate snow removal and what to expect in terms of a response to winter storms. Messages sent to the public can range from simple requests to remove parked vehicles from the street to notification of street closures or other severe conditions.

During storms, the Public Works Department will be staffed appropriately to take requests for service according to storm intensity.

Mass media and social media will be utilized to request compliance with the snow removal policy or to notify the public when extreme weather conditions force the suspension of solid waste collection or street closures.

DISPATCHING COMPLAINTS

Since snowplow operators are trained to follow priorities set in the policies and procedures, it would be detrimental to respond to individual complainants before letting the operators respond in accordance with the Snow Removal Policy. LPW will log requests for review and action.

The Public Works Director will need to be notified immediately of hazardous icy conditions or new snow accumulation on priority one streets, roadways blocked by drifting snow, or other emergency conditions.

Claims from residents for property damage caused by snowplows should be reported to the LPW.

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III. PUBLIC INFORMATION

ON-STREET PARKING

It is dangerous and difficult to plow streets clogged with parked vehicles. Some streets, especially cul-de-sacs, may not be plowed if plows cannot safely drive down them. The most helpful thing residents can do to facilitate snow removal is to park their cars off the street and encourage others to do the same.

SNOW BLOWING

Blowing, throwing or pushing snow from driveways and walks into the street creates additional work for snowplow operators and may create a traffic hazard. Throw snow onto landscaped areas in the yard or parking lot.

CUL-DE-SACS

It takes considerably longer to clear snow from cul-de-sacs than other “uninterrupted” stretches of City streets. Because of the high cost-to-benefit ratio, cul-de-sacs and dead end streets have the lowest priority. Cul-de-sacs will be cleared but it will likely be several days after a major storm ends.

RESIDENTIAL DRIVEWAYS

One of the most frequent concerns in the 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 driveways. The more snow that has fallen, the greater the problem will be.

One way residents can help is to pile snow they have shoveled **on the left side of the driveway as facing their home** in lieu of placing it on both sides at the end of the driveway. Doing this will help snowplow drivers avoid carrying piles from the “upstream” side back across driveways.

MAIL DELIVERY

City snow operators make every effort to remove snow as close to the curb as practical and to provide access to mailboxes for postal carriers. However, it is not always possible to provide ideal conditions and not damage mailboxes with the size and type of equipment the City operates. Therefore, the final cleaning adjacent to mailboxes is the responsibility of each resident.