



SNOWPLOWING & ICE CONTROL POLICY

I. Purpose

In order to provide the safest possible winter travel for the greatest number of people, the City of Anoka needs to annually review its policy regarding efficient and timely snow and ice control on our City's public through ways. This policy outlines the responsibilities within various city departments in order to accomplish this goal.

II. Responsible Agencies

The Public Services Department has the responsibility to clear and maintain the safest possible travel on the City's streets, and publicly owned parking facilities.

The Public Services Supervisor has responsibility for ice control and the clearing and removal of snow in the City's streets and publicly owned parking lots. The supervisor retains the latitude to adjust sequencing or route assignments based on storm conditions, equipment availability and/or other conditions warranting changes. The City will attempt to clear main thoroughfares as a priority.

The Public Services Department, with the assistance of the Police Department, monitors the street conditions. Together, they determine appropriate levels of activity to maintain the streets in the safest possible condition.

III. Commencement of Operations

A. Streets and Public Parking Lots

Snow plowing and/or ice control operations shall commence under the direction of the Public Services Supervisor. In their absence the Police Department Patrol Sergeant on duty and the Public Services Supervisor's designated representative will consult and determine when and what operations will begin.

In general, operations will be dealt with as follows:

1. Snow accumulations of two (2) inches or less will be handled on an as-needed basis and at the discretion of the Maintenance Supervisor, through such activities as spot sanding/salting and/or spot plowing.
2. Snow accumulation of two (2) inches or more with or without continuing snowfall, drifting snow, and/or icing of pavements may warrant commencement of full plowing operations.

B. Sidewalks

1. B-3 Central Business District

- a. Pursuant to Chapter 54 Article II Sec. 35 each owner or occupant of real estate shall clear or cause to be cleared all snow or ice from such sidewalk within 18-hours after the snow or ice has ceased to fall thereon.
- b. The city will assist with snow removal after one (1) inch of snow has fallen. Snow removal will commence when snow fall has ceased.
- c. Each owner or occupant is responsible for ice control on abutting public sidewalks.
- d. City assistance does not exempt any property owner from meeting this requirement.

2. Residential Areas and School Zones

- a. In accordance with Chapter 50 Article I Sec. 4 the owner of any building or structure shall be responsible for the removal of snow and ice from parking lots, driveways, steps, and walkways on the premises, as well as from abutting public sidewalks within 48 hours after cessation of the snowfall when three (3) inches or more or successive snowfall accumulations to a depth of three (3) inches has occurred.
- b. The owner of any building or structure shall additionally be responsible for ice control measures on abutting public sidewalks.
- c. The city will assist with snow removal on abutting public sidewalks after 3” of snow has fallen. Snow removal will commence when snow fall has ceased.
- d. City assistance does not exempt any property owner from meeting this requirement.

3. Sidewalks Abutting City Owned Property

- a. The city is responsible for snow removal on public sidewalks abutting city owned properties. Snow removal will commence when snow fall has ceased.
- b. Snow removal on sidewalks adjacent to city owned facilities will be held to the same standards as the Central Business District.
- c. Snow removal on public sidewalks adjacent to city owned open space/parks will be held to the same standards as the residential areas.

IV. Snow Removal/Hauling

Snow will be removed in a manner so as to minimize traffic obstructions.

The designated Public Services Supervisor will determine when snow removal operations will occur in the central business district area, streets, sidewalks and/or public parking facilities.

Snow removal operations will not commence until other snow plowing operations have been completed. Snow removal operations may also be delayed depending on weather conditions, personnel, and budget availability.

V. Use of Salt/Sand

The City will use salt/sand and other chemicals when there are hazardous, icy, or slippery conditions on roadways and sidewalks adjacent to city buildings. The Public Services Supervisor, at his/her discretion, may vary sand/salt/chemical mix to address varying conditions of wind, temperature, etc. to produce, in his/her judgment, the most effective results. Application will be limited on low volume streets and cul-de-sacs. As a general rule, the city does not do ice control on public sidewalks adjacent to open space/park or trails.

VI. Suspension of Operations

Generally, operations will continue until all roads are passable. Any decision to suspend operations will be made by the Public Services Supervisor and shall be based on the conditions of the storm.

Safety of the plow operators and the public is paramount. Therefore, snow clearing or removal operations may be suspended after 12 hours to allow personnel adequate time for rest. There may be instances when suspension of operations is not possible due to ongoing storm conditions. Operations may also be suspended during periods of limited visibility. The Public Services Department will do its best to provide access for emergency fire, police and medical services during a storm event.

VII. Property Damage

Snow plowing and ice control, by its nature, can cause harm to areas adjacent to the street even under the best of circumstances. The City's plow operators make every effort to avoid damage to areas adjoining the street, however, such damage does occur from time to time. The majority of damage occurs to improvements in the City Right-of-Way which extends approximately 10' to 15' beyond the street curbs.

The intent of the Right-of-Way is to provide room for snow storage, utilities, sidewalks, and other city uses. However, certain private improvements such as mail boxes are permitted within this area.

Therefore, the City will cooperate with the property owner to determine if the damage is the responsibility of the City and when it shall be the responsibility of the resident. The City accepts responsibility for physical damage to legally installed mailboxes if struck by a plow blade, wing, or other piece of equipment. Damage resulting from plow castings or the disturbance of snow or ice piles is the responsibility of the resident.

The City bears no responsibility for damage to irrigation systems, driveway markers, or other items illegally placed in the City Right-of-Way. If such items are deemed to be a traffic hazard or endanger street maintenance equipment or operators, the owner will be required to remove such items from the City Right-of-Way. Lawns that are scraped or gouged by City equipment will be repaired by top dressing and seeding the following spring. Residents are requested to assist by watering the areas that are repaired. In instances where there is a disagreement as to the source of the damage and/or repair responsibilities, the Director of Public Services or Police Department shall determine the obligation.

VIII. Driveways

One of the most frequent and most difficult problems in removal of snow from public streets is the snow deposited in driveways during plowing operations. City personnel do not provide driveway cleaning.

IX. Mail Delivery

The snow plow operators make every effort to remove snow as close to the curb line as practical and to provide access to mailboxes for the Postal Service. However, it is not possible to provide perfect conditions and minimize damage to mailboxes with the size and type of equipment the City operates. Therefore, the final cleaning adjacent to mailboxes is the responsibility of each resident.

X. Removal of Snow onto Roadways

According to the laws of the State of Minnesota, depositing snow in any fashion onto a public street/Right-of-Way or highway is illegal and punishable as a misdemeanor.

Chapter 54, Article II Section 36 of the Anoka City Code prohibits plowing, shoveling, blowing or placing snow onto public roadways from private property. The act of placing snow onto a public roadway may subject a person to a civil liability if a road hazard such as a slippery area, frozen rut or bump occurs and causes a traffic accident. This civil liability may extend to both the property owner and the person who actually placed the snow on the roadway/Right-of-Way.

The City of Anoka asks all citizens to comply with these rules which are designed to keep the streets, Right-of-Ways, and highways safe during the winter months.

XI. Attention Vehicle Owners

Within the City of Anoka, any person having a vehicle parked on any street after a continuous snowfall accumulating two (2) or more inches of snow will be subject to tagging and possible towing at the owners expense. This rule is enforced from 6 A.M. to 2 A.M. or until the street has been plowed to the full width of the roadway. By Ordinance, no parking is allowed on any City street from 2 A.M. to 6 A.M.

XII. Disclaimer

All parts of this policy may be affected by at least one or more of the following, which may delay all or some of the services provided:

- Equipment breakdowns
- Vehicles disabled in deep snow
- Weather so severe as to cause crews to be called in from the streets (i.e. white-out conditions)
- Equipment rendered inadequate by the depth of snow or drifts
- Crew breaks, breaks required by refueling, refilling of material spreaders, installing chains or blades
- Unforeseen emergencies

Policy History

Initially Adopted: 1997

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