

**Town of Grant  
Portage County, Wisconsin  
WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE POLICY**

**PURPOSE:**

The overall goal is to establish a realistic, meaningful, and practical policy for winter road maintenance that has the flexibility required to make adjustments as warranted with the character of the snow and ice control needs for any given winter event.

**GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT:**

It shall be the general policy of the Town of Grant to mechanically and as efficiently as possible, remove accumulated snow or ice from the travel portion of the town roads within a reasonable time. (By state statute 893.83(1) the township has three (3) weeks to remove natural snow and ice accumulations.)

This does not mean bare, dry pavement, gravel or dirt should be expected after each snowfall or ice storm. In fact, many township roads may have only plowed snow pack throughout much of the winter season. Motorists will be expected to modify their driving in accordance with the road conditions.

Planning and preparing for snow and ice removal operations is difficult due to the uniqueness of each storm. The inter-relationship of factors such as rate of snowfall, moisture content, accumulation, temperature, time of day, wind velocity and available resources determine the operational response for the proper clearance of the roads.

Under this policy the goal of winter maintenance is to 1) minimize hazards of slippery road conditions to motorists 2) facilitate handling of emergencies 3) restore traveling conditions for the safety and convenience of the general public, all within the limitations of equipment, manpower, resource conservation, facility & personnel protection and environmental concerns.

**SNOWPLOW OPERATIONS:**

Routine snow plowing usually begins when snow accumulates to 2-3" on average; it is still snowing; and the forecast is for 3 or more inches. Earlier deployment of maintenance crews may be necessary if combined with freezing and icing conditions, occurrence of an ice storm, high winds or freezing rain. Second pass snow plowing and post storm clean up is encouraged during early morning weekday hours but is heavily dependent upon the nature of the winter storm event.

Note: A winter storm depositing 2-3" total accumulation or less during off hours and/or weekends may be cleaned on early weekday mornings in lieu of overtime hours.

The main objective of snow removal operations is to plow the roadway surfaces and shoulders in a single pass per travel direction. Roads with the highest traffic volume, school bus routes, households and dangerous spots have the highest priority. All roads shall be cleared as expeditiously as is economically and operationally practical to provide reasonable traffic service. In order to provide efficient operation it may be necessary plow a lower class of roadway to reach an area of higher priority. It may also be necessary to clear a route for emergency calls such as police, fire and ambulance.

The Town Chairperson and/or Town Board of Supervisors has the authority to suspend snow and ice control operations in severe storm conditions when there is danger to operators or it is not

practical or cost effective to continue. Operations may be suspended or reduced if there are equipment breakdowns, qualified operators are not available or other conditions occur beyond the town's control. Plowing of snow may be limited in storms in late spring due to the lack of frost to support the snowplow.

The discretionary act of ordering personnel and equipment into service for a winter maintenance operation shall be primarily with the full time employee, the Town Chairperson and/or Town Board of Supervisors.

### **SNOWPLOW OPERATORS:**

Snowplow operators shall only be allowed to work a maximum of 14 consecutive hours and at such time shall have a 6-8 hour minimum reprieve of duties. Relief operators will be sought if snowplowing efforts remain.

### **EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE:**

Prior to the deployment of any snow fighting equipment it shall be the practice of equipment operators to perform all of the following:

- Check all oil levels (engine, transmission, hydraulics, windshield washer)
- Check coolant level
- Check for fluid leaks by visual inspection\*
- Check for loose bolts on cutting edges/shoes etc.
- Check for wear on cutting edges, shoes, blades etc.
- Check safety items – safety lights, headlights, taillights, brakes etc.
- Check for worn or frayed wiring/lines/hoses etc.
- Check gauges for oil pressure, alternator, fuel, engine temperature etc.\*
- Check cleanliness, windows, mirrors, floor (rolling or airborne objects)

\* Indicates items to be checked consistently during actual operations

### **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:**

- As much as practical, plow school bus routes as warranted prior to pick up and drop off times.
- All equipment including both patrol trucks, one-ton pickup and the motor grader shall be equipped and ready to deploy for winter maintenance prior to the onset of winter storm events.
- Scraping of roadways to remove snow and ice with equipment such as the motor grader should be done when temperatures and thawing conditions permit.
- The enhanced cleaning of radius points and benching of snow to improve vision and safety at intersections shall be done during normal work hours in a post storm clean up effort.
- Benching of accumulated snow along the shoulders to facilitate additional snow storage shall be done during normal work hours as warranted.
- If practical and permission is granted by adjacent property owners, benching of accumulated snow in open fields is encouraged to prevent drifting of roadways.

**ICE REMOVAL:**

The township uses abrasive sand treated with rock salt. This mixture will be applied at curves, intersections, hills and steep grades. Other road surfaces may receive an application of sand/salt as may be required or directed, to provide a safe surface for traffic. Certain weather conditions may allow the sand/salt mixture to promote a thawing or clearing of compact snow or ice.

**DRIVEWAYS:**

Driveway maintenance is the property owner's responsibility. The Town does not have any obligation to clear snow from blocked driveways as a result of snowplow operations. State Statute 86.01 & 346.94 prohibits plowing any snow from driveways onto State, County or Town roads. No snow or ice removal from private property shall be deposited in the roadway and then expected to be cleared by personnel from the township. Pushing, blowing, or carrying and depositing snow or ice onto a public roadway is prohibited. Such activities are dangerous and could cause injury or accidents and may not allow for safe passage by the public.

**MAILBOXES:**

Snowplow operators are instructed to be cautious near mailboxes. In most cases a properly installed mailbox will permit a snowplow to pass by without damage. Most cases of damaged mailboxes are caused by heavy snow hitting the box and damage resulting from snow and ice is not the Township's responsibility for repair or replacement. The town will repair or replace a mailbox installation if it is hit by the plow and the town is notified. If a new box is necessary the maximum amount of \$30.00 is allowed for the town or owner to purchase one. Owners may be asked to move mailboxes if they hinder or obstruct snowplow operations.

**PARKING REGULATIONS:**

The public shall refrain from parking on all road right-of-ways. Vehicles parked illegally or abandoned on roads are subject to towing at the owner's expense.

**MAINTENANCE REQUESTS & EMERGENCY CALLS:**

All courteous calls will be handled promptly and with discretionary judgment by town board supervisors. The response to such calls may vary depending upon the availability of the person called and status of snowplow operations. Emergency calls should be directed to 911 for the quickest service possible. Complaints or comments should be made at the monthly town board meetings.

It is not the Township's responsibility to tow distressed or stuck vehicles from the roadway or ditches unless a safety risk to the traveling public or equipment operators exists. It is the owner's responsibility to expeditiously free the vehicle from the roadway or roadside.

The Winter Road Maintenance Policy shall be deemed to be in effect after its adoption by the Town Board.