

SNOW AND ICE
INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET



Town of Winchendon
Department of Public Works
109 Front Street
Winchendon, MA 01475
978-297-0170

Dear Winchendon Resident:

This booklet has been prepared to inform you about the many problems that winter weather causes to the Town and to the Department of Public Works in particular. Each type of storm event, snowfall, sleet, and ice storms, presents a different challenge to Public Works crews, and different means of attack are necessary for each one. It is unusual to have a “typical” winter storm. Please take a few moments to read this informational booklet. If you have any questions about snow removal or other winter weather issues, please contact the Department of Public Works office at 978-297-0170.





FACTS RELATED TO SNOW REMOVAL

1. The Department of Public Works is currently responsible for maintaining approximately 135 miles of paved and unpaved roadways. In addition, the Department is responsible for removing snow and ice from downtown sidewalks. Most residential roads require multiple passes with the plow to clear them. Highways and major streets must be plowed continuously throughout the course of a significant snowstorm.

2. The Department of Public Works snow-fighting crew consists of 14 men:
 - 8 Drivers who plow/sand and salt/remove ice
 - 1 Operator who loads the trucks with sand/salt
 - 2 Mechanics who repair equipment and also assist with plowing
 - 2 Foremen who supervise plowing crews while also plowing their own routes
 - 1 Director who oversees all weather emergency operations

3. The Town is divided into 4 plow routes and 1 sidewalk route. It can take a driver up to 16 hours to completely plow his/her route once. Each driver has about 60 lane miles to plow.
4. The Department of Public Works has a total of 13 vehicles used in snow removal operations. These consist of:
 - 4 trucks, 3 are equipped with sanders
 - 1 grader
 - 2 loaders
 - 2 backhoes
 - 2 one-ton dump trucks
 - 2 pick-up trucks
5. The Department of Public Works vehicle fleet is aging, which causes a high level of breakdowns, especially under harsh weather conditions.
6. The Department of Public Works is also responsible for removing the snow banks from the downtown business area and other areas where snow build-up can be a traffic and safety hazard. This work must generally be done at night to avoid interfering with normal traffic.
7. Mailboxes are often victims of snowplowing operations. The highest incident of mailbox damage occurs during storms with heavy, wet

snow, or snow followed by rain. It is seldom the plow itself that damages or knocks down a mailbox. The actual culprit is the heavy snow/ice coming off the end of the plow. Although DPW employees do their best to not cause this type of damage, it cannot be avoided in certain weather situations. If your mailbox is damaged by snowplowing operations, contact the DPW office and arrangements will be made to compensate you (up to a maximum amount of \$40.00).

8. It takes the DPW approximately 24 hours to clear all town ways after a four to six inch snowstorm. Heavier snow or ice will significantly increase the time required to complete plowing operations.
9. In a storm, the main highways, such as Route 202, must be cleared first and most often to keep major traffic flowing. Heavily used secondary roadways such as Glenallen, Maple, High, and River Streets, and Old Baldwinville and Forristall Roads will be the next to be cleared. If you live on a remote residential street, the DPW will get to you. However, given the small size of the plowing crew and the many miles of roadway in Winchendon, it will take several hours to get to the less traveled ways. In a severe storm, it may take up to 24 hours to reach some areas.

10. People often complain that they see plows driving along roads with their plows up. These vehicles are going to their assigned routes. If they traveled with their plows down, it would greatly slow their travel time. The purpose is to get them to their outlying routes as quickly as possible.

11. Please have patience and make an effort to understand that clearing Town roads is an enormous task. The DPW employees who are plowing are professionals, skilled at their jobs. During a winter storm event, it is common for them to be on duty for eighteen hours or more. Storms come at all hours of the day. DPW employees must be there to keep the roads open, whether it is 3:00pm or 3:00am.



WINTER SNOW TIPS

- A. Before clearing the last 3 to 5 feet of your driveway, wait until the road has been plowed. Plow drivers do not try to plow snow into your driveway - they simply cannot stop plowing at each driveway to avoid leaving snow in them. Also, please remember, the same drivers that have been working for many hours may have to go home and remove snow that other DPW workers, or even themselves, have plowed into their own driveways.

- B. During and after a heavy snowstorm, the plows may make two to four passes to clear snow and push it back from the road edges. This may result in a windrow across your driveway. You can lessen this problem by placing snow cleared from your driveway where the plow will take it down the street and not push it back into the driveway.

- C. Do not plant trees or shrubs or install fences too close to the edge of the road. They can be damaged by plowing operations.

- D. Do not drive too closely behind a sander. The sand/salt being used to treat the roads can damage your car's windshield and paint.
- E. Do not shovel, blow, or plow snow onto roadways or sidewalks. It creates dangerous situations and makes removal more difficult. It is also a violation of Town bylaws.
- F. Small quantities of sand/salt are available free of charge to residents at the Town garage on Glenallen Street. You must bring your own containers and load it yourselves.
- G. If possible, please help us out by clearing storm drains adjacent to your property. This will prevent ponding and icing situations.
- H. **CLEAR SNOW FROM AROUND FIRE HYDRANTS!**
The life and property you save may be your own.

