



# CITY OF RUSHFORD PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT SNOW REMOVAL POLICY

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**CITY OF RUSHFORD  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
SNOW REMOVAL POLICY**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to provide a common understanding of the extent of the City of Rushford's winter road maintenance activity regarding snow and ice removal, to define the scope and level of services, to describe priority roads or routes, and to inform the public as to their responsibilities.

The City of Rushford Public Works Department reserves the right to exercise flexibility in these general guidelines depending upon the type of snow, wind and times of day the snow falls. In the delivery of snow removal service, efforts will be made to balance the needs of road safety, traffic demands, employee safety as well as constraints involving time, money and equipment availability.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

\*The Public Works Director or his designated representative is responsible to ensure that operators are on the job in time to make roads accessible. When possible, plowing or sanding will be scheduled prior to heavy traffic levels to prevent snow compaction.

\*The Department will be responsible for preventative maintenance programs for all equipment to ensure availability and reliability when needed. The Department will plan for and recommend necessary equipment upgrades and/or replacements in a timely manner to allow for proper budgeting of those expenditures.

\*The Department is responsible for the selection, storage and application of abrasives, salt and chemicals for controlling snow and ice under differing weather conditions.

\*Necessary safety equipment, safety training and operator training will be made available for employees to foster ongoing improvements in snow and ice control.

\*Wherever possible, cooperative efforts between the County or State may be arranged to coordinate services, avoid duplication of effort, and in the joint use of facilities or materials. The sharing of winter maintenance information with other governmental units will be utilized to enhance the cost effectiveness and efficiency of service.

\*To better obtain cooperation from the public, the Department will periodically communicate to residents, through City newsletters, posted notices and public access television notices, the policies and ordinances regarding snow and ice removal and what services the public can reasonably expect.

**GOALS & PRIORITIES:**

It is the goal and intent of the City of Rushford Public Works Department to have all driving lanes in the City plowed within a 12 hour period. In case of snowfall long in duration, the streets will be plowed every 12 hours. The snow plowing procedure varies with the depth of snow fall as follows: Trace to 1” = Ice Control; 1+” = Plowing of Streets

The above amount is a benchmark only, used to signal when plowing efforts typically begin. Other conditions such as wind or icy rain may warrant an earlier response. Other maintenance, such as sanding, may begin earlier than plowing or as road conditions dictate, even when plowing is unnecessary.

- \*Priority 1 - Central Business District streets including city owned parking lots
  - Bridges; Pine Meadows Lane & Eiken Drive access to RP School site
- \*Priority 2 - Arterial Streets
- \*Priority 3 - Clearing of sidewalks on bridges and around all City owned buildings
- \*Priority 4 - City alleyways
- \*Priority 5 – Airport

\*Snow will be piled from the city owned parking lots and central business district to be loaded and hauled away when arterial streets have been sufficiently cleared of snow. At no time will piles of snow be allowed to accumulate so as to become a hazard or impede the normal flow of traffic.

\*Snow and ice control operations will proceed as long as weather conditions do not endanger the safety of employees. Other conditions, such as equipment breakdown, or shortage of equipment operators, may necessitate changes from normal operations.

**MONITORING WEATHER CONDITONS:** The Public Works Department will continue to monitor weather conditions during regular operating hours via the Weather Channel and on the computer via state and national weather links. During off hours for the Public Works Department, the Police Department will monitor the streets and notify the Public Works Department if slippery or hazardous conditions develop that warrant immediate attention. The Police Department will notify the Public Works Department during off-hours if snowfall accumulations reach one-half to .75 inches or of freezing rain. This notification will allow time to begin salting and sanding before the snow becomes too thick or ice develops. If necessary, the Police Department will place traffic control devices in hazardous areas to indicate conditions to the driving public.

**USE OF SALT & CHEMICALS ON STREETS:** In compliance with State Legislation, the Public Works Department shall utilize salt and chemicals only at such places as upon hills, intersections or upon high speed or arterial roadways where vehicle traction is particularly critical and only if, in the opinion of the road authorities, removal of snow and ice or reduction of hazardous conditions by blading, plowing or sanding cannot be accomplished within a reasonable period of time.

**HOW SNOW WILL BE PLOWED/REMOVED:** Snow will be plowed in a manner so as to minimize any traffic obstructions. The center of the roadway will be plowed first. The snow shall be pushed to the right side of the roadway (traffic side) whenever possible. The discharge shall go onto the boulevards areas of the streets. Plow operators will take extreme care so as not to push snow onto residential sidewalk areas. In times of extreme snowfall, streets will not always be able to be completely cleared of snow immediately after snowfalls have ceased, final street cleanup may not be completed until the second day of plow operations. City crews are responsible for snow removal and ice control on all city owned sidewalks. Normally this will involve dispatching crews to facilitate snow removal starting with sidewalk sweeping for lighter snowfalls, to plowing and/or blowing snow as necessary.

**PUBLIC SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL:** In accordance with City Ordinance, the accumulation of snow or ice upon any public sidewalk constitutes a public nuisance which shall be removed by the owner or occupant of the property abutting such sidewalk within twelve (12) hours after such snow or ice has ceased to be deposited. If the owner or occupant fails to remove the snow or ice accumulation, the City Clerk's Office will inform the owner or occupant by letter that they must comply or the City will cause the snow or ice to be removed at a rate of \$50.00 per hour, with a one-hour minimum charge. If the owner fails to pay the charges for snow or ice removal, the City may, pursuant to MN Statute, Chapter 429, assess the charges against the property benefited and certify the assessment to the County Auditor for collection as a special assessment on the property tax rolls.

**PLACING SNOW OR ICE ON PUBLIC STREETS OR CITY PROPERTY:** It is unlawful for any person not acting under contract with the City to remove snow or ice from private property, such as driveways and sidewalks, and place in such quantity or manner as to cause a hazard to travel on public streets without proper arrangements for the immediate removal. It is unlawful for any person not acting under contract with the City to place or deposit any snow or ice upon City property. It is also the responsibility of the resident to clean snow from the following areas: driveway approaches, around trash cans, mailboxes, and newspaper tubes. Residents are also encouraged to "adopt" any fire hydrant located near their property to ensure clear access by the fire department.

**PUBLIC COMPLAINTS OR REQUESTS:** Residents with requests, complaints or concerns regarding snow and ice removal should call the Rushford City Hall at 507-864-2444, where staff will relay the information to the Public Works Department. Depending on the nature of the request or concern, the Department will either take the appropriate action necessary or direct City Hall staff to respond to the resident.

**OTHER SNOW RELATED CONCERNS:** In the process of plowing snow, crew members at times do inadvertently allow the plow to "climb" the curb and disturb the sod. This is especially true in late fall/early spring plowing, and in cul-de-sac areas. If sod is damaged, property owners are responsible for minor repairs. If damage is excessive, residents should call the Rushford City Hall to report the damage. Mailboxes that are physically hit or damaged by city snowplows will be repaired by the City. Mailboxes knocked down by the weight of the snow thrown from the plow are considered the owner's responsibility to replace.

**PARKING OF VEHICLES/TOWING:** As there is no official policy for alternate side parking covering the entire City, residents are obligated to move or remove parked vehicles from the roadway to facilitate the effective plowing of the roadway. If snowplows are forced to go around parked vehicles, the snow surrounding the car can create a hazard to the traveling public as well as plow operators and equipment.

In areas where streets are of substandard width, the City may designate seasonal alternate side parking to insure effective plowing and safe travel for residents and emergency vehicles. Alternate side parking will be required for the following areas: Green Street, Northview Street and Ferry Street. Residents on these streets will be provided an annual reminder notice of this regulation and signage will be installed on the streets.

From November 15 to March 15, vehicles parked on the above streets between Midnight and 7:00 a.m. must be on the even-numbered side of the street when the date is even and on the odd-numbered side of the street when the date is odd.

To allow for safe and efficient snow removal in **alleyways**, vehicles will not be allowed to be parked parallel on the side of an alley or to be parked in any manner which would obstruct or deter snowplow trucks from being able to clear the entire width of the alleyway.

Vehicles that have been parked on **ANY street or alleyway or public parking lot** longer than 12 hours and have prohibited the complete clearing of the street, alley or lot may be ticketed by the Rushford Police Department and may be towed at the owner's expense.

**ACCIDENTS DURING SNOW REMOVAL OPERATIONS:** Should an employee have an accident of any type during snow removal operations, they must immediately notify their supervisor stating the type of accident and the conditions that created the accident. If the accident involves personal injury or a vehicle accident, the operator must remain on the scene of the accident until the police arrive. After the operator has informed the police of conditions and other pertinent data concerning the accident, the supervisor will determine whether the operator will continue with plowing operations. In the event of a very minor accident that does not involve another vehicle or personal injury; the supervisor will determine if the accident warrants calling the Police Dept. This is done to insure that the police are not contacted for insignificant accidents such as bent sign posts, etc. and the plow truck may continue its plowing.

**DECLARATION OF SNOW EMERGENCY:** The declaration of a snow emergency will be made by the Public Works Director or his designated representative. The public will be informed via announcements on area radio and television stations, on the local access cable channels and on the City's Face Book page that no parking will be allowed on city streets and roadways until sufficient plowing has occurred for safe travel.

**SEVERE WEATHER/EMERGENCY VEHICLE ASSISTANCE:** In the interest of public safety, city crews may provide assistance to emergency vehicles when requested, within a reasonable response distance. This may include plowing and applying ice control materials to county, state, township and private roadways if manpower and equipment are available.

