

Guide to Winter Operations



Winter storms can be difficult for all of us, motorists, residents and snowplow operators alike. The primary goal of the Public Works Department is to maintain passable roads so that emergency crews (police, fire, ambulances) and school buses have access to each property. The secondary goal is to treat icy surfaces and/or plow snow for the safe passage of the general public. Flexibility is needed to adapt to the variety of circumstances and conditions during a snow or ice event. Several variables determine how we deal with a storm: Air temp (before, during and after) time of day, day of the week, forecast, intensity, duration and type of precipitation.

Public Works staff is a dedicated group of Town employees devoted to doing whatever is necessary working “around the clock” in order to keep our roadways as safe as possible.

Pre-Treating

We rely on a private weather forecasting service, our own observation, and Public Safety personnel to advise us of deteriorating road conditions. In anticipation of precipitation roadways are treated with a mix of material containing a 1:1 ratio of sand to salt.

This application provides traction and prevents snow from bonding to the pavement. Not all roads can be treated “first.” Sanding the entire Town takes approximately 3 hours. **After** the initial application we give priority to main roads and hills and respond to isolated problem areas.

Plowing:

This operation begins when 2-3 inches of snow accumulates. In combination with contracted equipment, town vehicles are assigned to a predetermined route and will remain in their pattern until the storm subsides. The town is divided into seven circuitous routes.

Plows make initial passes down the centerline of each street to open roadways for emergency and other vehicles. After all streets in the route are “opened up” plows return to push snow back to the gutter line

allowing for normal traffic flow while making room for more snow.

We make every effort to minimize snow being plowed into driveways unfortunately, this is unavoidable. Operators cannot lift plows as they pass each driveway. It is the property owner’s responsibility to clear their own driveway and it is your choice when to initiate this task.

*Residents may want to wait until after plows push back and widen the roads.

Please do not be misled by plow trucks riding with their plows up. During an extended storm, vehicles must return to the garage for fuel or repairs, or to be reassigned to another section of Town.

Post Storm:

When all roads are clear and the storm subsides another round of sand/salt mix may be applied to improve traction and melt the remaining snow and ice.

Spot Sanding:

There are times during light precipitation and freeze/thaw cycles where “spot sanding” is necessary. This is generally initiated by the Lunenburg Police Department night shift. If the Police Department and/or the DPW feels spot sanding is needed in an area where icing has occurred, the DPW will be called in to address the immediate problem. Once that problem is addressed, the crew will then check other areas of Town to see if treatment is necessary.

SIDEWALKS:

Due to limited resources the clearing of sidewalks will not begin until roadways have been completed. Pedestrians should use extreme caution if they choose to walk in the roadway prior to the plowing of sidewalks. The clearing of walkways around public buildings is subcontracted to private vendors and addressed continually throughout the storm event.

Right- Of-Way:

Please be aware that each person’s front yard in many instances does not extend to the edge of pavement since the Town owned right-of-way varies in width. The Town will not be responsible for damage to any property or personal item which has been placed or left within the roadway or the town owned right-of-way

such as sprinkler heads, shrubs or plants, fences or stone walls.

The Town will assess reported damages. If the fence or wall is within the Town right-of-way we are not responsible for the damage. We will repair the damage ONLY if it was caused by direct contact with a Town vehicle.

Mailboxes installed in the right-of-way are placed at the owner's risk. Each mailbox installation should be sufficiently solid to withstand snow clearing efforts. Snow rolling off the plows in the process of clearing the roads may damage all but the strongest of mailboxes and posts. This is especially common after a heavy wet snowfall. The Town is not responsible for this damage.

The Town will assess damaged mailboxes and make repairs ONLY if the mailbox has been physically struck and damaged by a Town vehicle.

Town By-Law: Article 5 Section 14: No person shall plow, shovel, or otherwise place snow or debris onto that portion of public way open to travel

What you can do to help....

One of our biggest challenges while clearing roads is a car parked in the roadway. Residents are asked to remove vehicles as early as possible once a storm is forecasted.

Please stay off the roads if at all possible and take precautionary measures if you must travel. Plows can operate more efficiently with less traffic.

Residents are asked to please stay back far enough so plows can see you if backing up. Never pass a plow truck unless signaled to do so by the driver.

Speed is the biggest cause of accidents during snowstorms. Remember, speed should be reduced and stopping distances increased during wintry conditions.

Please be patient. Plow operators work in extreme conditions for extended periods of time with little rest.

Remember, driving in winter snowstorms should be avoided whenever possible. In every storm, there are times when road conditions are hazardous despite everyone's best effort. Our work to restore safe road conditions is completed more efficiently when roads are free of traffic and illegally parked vehicles. If you must drive, make sure your vehicle is properly

prepared. Be cautious, be courteous, and make sure to allow extra time.

Please pay special attention to pedestrians, children, and pets during winter operations.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support. If you have any questions regarding Town By-laws, parking restrictions or winter operations the following numbers may be helpful to you:

DPW	(978) 582-4160
POLICE	(978) 582-4150
BOARD OF SELECTMEN	(978) 582-4144

Sand for Seniors

In partnership with the Council on Aging , 5 gallon containers of sand will be available free of charge to our seniors. Please call 978- 582- 4166 to arrange delivery.

Sand is no longer available for pick-up at the DPW facility