

Policy Title:	Snow Removal Policy
Adopted on:	December 10, 2012
Adopted by:	City Council
Jurisdiction of Policy:	Superintendent of Public Works & Parks
Effective Date:	Immediately

1. Purpose

The City of Weyburn is committed to providing snow removal and other winter maintenance services to facilitate vehicle and pedestrian traffic flow as safely and effectively as environmental conditions permit. Due to the extremes of western Canadian winters it should be acknowledged that hazardous road conditions may periodically exist despite the City’s best efforts. The intent of this policy is to provide a framework indicating the level and timeliness of service for primary, secondary and residential routes.

2. Jurisdiction

The Superintendent of Public Works & Parks or his designate shall be responsible for determining the level of response and initiating snow removal activities as contained in this policy.

3. Definitions

Winter Storm Event – refers to adverse conditions where wind, or a combination of wind and precipitation, results in snow accumulation on street and sidewalk surfaces usually accompanied by reduced visibility, cold temperatures and wind chill.

Freezing Rain Event – refers to incidence of freezing rain causing ice accumulation on street and sidewalk surfaces.

Priority Street Route – refers to major arterial streets (see appendix).

Secondary Street Route – refers to minor arterial and major collector streets (see appendix).

Residential Street Route – refers to minor collector and residential streets not otherwise designated.

Sidewalk Snow Removal Route – refers to sidewalks along arterial and collector streets where the City performs sidewalk snow removal. Sidewalk clearing along this route is limited to one side of the street in order to provide a pedestrian route where not otherwise cleared by adjacent property owners.

City Centre – refers to the area bounded by, and including, Government Road to the west; Fifth Street to the east; Coteau Avenue to the north; and Railway Avenue to the south. Snow accumulation in this area is typically removed, rather than plowed to the curb, and is normally performed during an overnight operation.

Street Sanding – refers to the application of granular material and/or salt to improve traction at, and along, approaches to street intersections.

Windrow – refers to the snow ridge deposited along the curb/edge of street by the graders during snow clearing operation.

4. Process

I. During a Winter Storm Event

During a storm event snow clearing operations will be limited to ensuring emergency vehicles such as Ambulance and Fire can respond to emergency calls. *Very minimal snow clearing or other winter maintenance will be conducted at this time and in the event of limited or near zero visibility all operations will cease until conditions improve to safeguard both the public and City employees.*

II. Upon Conclusion of a Winter Storm Event

Immediately upon the conclusion of a storm event or when conditions improve to allow work to be conducted; crews will be organized and dispatched to commence snow clearing operations.

a) Priority Street Route

As the term indicates these roads and streets will be graded first; as soon as possible after the abatement of a major storm event. Every effort will be made to maintain priority routes as close to bare pavement as is practicable; though during initial clearing after a major storm, a compacted drivable surface will be the accepted standard. A second grading of these routes will be conducted once major clearing operations are complete.

Between winter storm events the route will be maintained according to the standard as required. If, as the winter progresses, windrows become too large or extend into driving lanes, a windrow removal operation may be scheduled. Typically this would only be required after repeated heavy snowfalls.

Every effort will be made to complete initial clearing on primary routes within eight (8) hours of the abatement of a storm event. This is a guideline only. It will be highly dependent upon the severity of the event and equipment reliability (breakdown).

b) Secondary Street Route

Streets along this route will be cleared after completion of the priority route. Every effort will be made to maintain secondary routes as close to bare pavement as is practicable; though during initial clearing after a major storm, a compacted drivable surface will be the accepted standard. A second grading of these routes will be conducted once major clearing operations are complete. Where secondary routes pass through residential areas with combined curb and sidewalk, an effort will be made to deposit the windrow to one side to keep sidewalks clear on the opposite side as per the sidewalk snow removal route.

Between winter storm events the route will be maintained according to the standard as required. If, as the winter progresses, windrows become too large or extend into driving lanes a windrow removal operation may be scheduled. Typically this would only be required after repeated heavy snowfalls.

Every effort will be made to complete initial clearing on secondary routes within eighteen (18) hours of the abatement of a storm event. This is a guideline only. It will be highly dependent upon the severity of the event and equipment reliability (breakdown).

c) Residential Street Route

The standard for residential street clearing is to maintain a compacted, drivable, snow packed surface. A bare pavement surface is very difficult to maintain during an average winter due to the extent and narrowness of residential streets, as well as the incremental volume of cleared snow. In residential areas snow is graded to either side of the street in windrows. Even when maintaining a drivable, snow packed surface the size of these windrows can grow quite large and can create an issue for maintaining street parking and two way traffic flow. ***It would quickly become both cost and manpower prohibitive to maintain bare pavement as windrows would have to be physically removed multiple times during an average winter.***

Between winter storm events, periodically and as required, the compacted street surface in residential areas will be lightly graded to reduce and flatten ruts to maintain the drivability as per the standard.

In residential subdivisions where combined curb and sidewalk exist, snow will be windrowed onto the sidewalks to maintain clearance for street parking and two way traffic flow. ***This has been controversial in the past; however, to maintain these clearances there is no viable option other than prohibiting street parking entirely during winter months.***

On bays and cul-de-sacs, wind and snow have a tendency to build up and cause major blockages. These types of streets are typically cleared utilizing loaders and trucks as normal street grading is not sufficient.

Typically, residential snow clearing will be scheduled according to the Refuse Collection Routes simply because most residents are familiar with their specific route location facilitating public releases and notifications regarding ongoing operations.

Road graders are equipped with a retractable wing which is lowered to pull snow past residential driveways to avoid heavy windrows blocking access. ***It is unavoidable that some snow will trickle off the edge of this wing, especially in heavy snow conditions. This is considered acceptable and our procedures dictate that operators will not return to clear this minor inconvenience regardless of complaints received.*** If it is apparent a driveway is missed completely the operator will be instructed to return and clear the windrow.

Following the abatement of a storm, event early attention will be provided to those residential areas near the City's perimeter where the snow has the tendency to accumulate in large drifts. Other residential areas will be cleared or graded upon completion of primary and secondary routes only when and where it is deemed necessary. Following larger storm events, every effort will be made to complete residential snow clearing within sixty (60) hours of the storms abatement. This is a guideline only. It will be highly dependent upon the severity of the event and equipment reliability (breakdown).

d) City Centre

Following moderate or even mild storm events, it is usually necessary to perform overnight snow removal in the City Centre. Crews typically begin operations at 10:00 p.m. and work through until mid-morning (10:00 a.m.) of the following day. Snow is windrowed in the centre of each street, loaded and trucked to the nearest snow dump site.

Snow removal operations in the City Centre will usually occur during overnight hours of the first full night following the abatement of a storm event. Once snow is removed from streets, and if time permits, lanes and parking lots in the area will also be cleared. Frequently lanes and lots require a separate operation to be scheduled relative to the priorities of the overall snow clearing operation. This is a guideline only. It will be highly dependent upon the severity of the event and equipment reliability (breakdown).

e) Airport, Recreation & Leisure Venues, City Facilities

Every attempt will be made to clear the runways at the airport following a storm event. ***Crews will not be diverted from City priority routes for this purpose and as a result it may be necessary for the Airport Manager to obtain the services of an outside contractor or temporarily close the facility to all air traffic.***

Snow clearing at Crescent Point Place will be performed as time and resources permit. Every effort will be made to schedule operations prior to venue events, however, immediately following a severe storm event this may not be possible and it may be advisable to utilize outside contractors. The Facility Manager will be notified in such a circumstance.

Parking areas at the Leisure Centre and other City facilities will be cleared as time and circumstance permit following a request from each respective Department. *Public Works will not routinely monitor the condition of these areas, nor will they be given priority over streets and roads.*

f) Sidewalk Snow Removal Route

Sidewalk snow clearing along the removal route will occur following the abatement of a storm event. The route has been established to facilitate pedestrian passage and clearing will only occur where adjacent property owners have not already cleared the snow. Only those sidewalks located on the route map will be cleared.

Once the sidewalk route is complete walkways will be cleared in Jubilee Park followed by the Tatagwa Trail System.

Between storm events sidewalks will be cleared as necessary. During extended periods of windy weather it may not be practicable to continually clear trails in the Tatagwa System as they tend to blow in as quickly as they are cleared under those conditions.

g) Lane Clearing

With exception of the City Centre, as well as certain designated lanes behind apartment/condominium complexes, lane clearing is not performed at any time during winter months. All requests for this service will be denied.

h) Street Sanding

Street sanding typically occurs after the abatement of a storm event and after graders and other equipment have cleared the roads of snow. It will also occur after any freezing rain event.

A mixture of salt and crusher chips are utilized during sanding operations with the relative proportion of each dependent on the outside temperature. In colder temperatures salt is less effective.

Street sanding also occurs regularly throughout the winter including evenings and weekends. Streets are monitored and staff dispatched as required.

Following freezing rain events crews will apply ice melt to sidewalks in the City Centre where business owners have not already done so.

III. Reporting and Public Notification

Following a winter storm event and during all subsequent snow clearing operations, the Public Works Superintendent or his designate shall provide detailed email updates on a regular basis to the Director of Engineering, the City Manager and the City Clerk. City Council shall also be included in these email reports in order they be kept apprised of developments in a timely manner.

These updates will include such information as work completed to date, schedules for subsequent operations, and tentative timelines for completion of priority, secondary and residential routes and all other pertinent information.

The Public shall be regularly updated regarding routes and clearing schedules through the Everbridge Alert Notification System and through media outlets where possible.

IV. Appendix

Attached to this document:

- Snow Clearing Priority Route Map
- Sidewalk Snow Removal Route Map