

City of Omaha Snow Operations Plan

Executive Summary

The City of Omaha is responsible for snow removal from all city streets, alleys, trails, park roads and city facilities. The highest priority is given to major city streets that carry the large volumes of traffic at the highest speeds. Residential streets are cleared as soon as possible but are generally done after major streets are cleared.

The safety of pedestrians using city facilities such as libraries and community centers is a concern. Snow removal from sidewalks, parking lots, and internal drives at these facilities is given a high priority.

In the winter of 2010 / 2011, Omaha is setting a goal to improve coordination between snow operations in the Parks Department and the Public Works Department. Resources will be readily shared between Departments.

Parking Restrictions in a Snow Emergency

When conditions are appropriate, the city will declare a snow emergency.

- Parking restrictions unique to snow emergencies will go into effect. These restrictions ban parking on the emergency snow routes.
- The parking restrictions also include odd / even parking in residential areas east of 72nd street.
- Cars must park on the odd side of the street on odd dates and the even side of the street on even dates. This will allow plows to clear residential streets more quickly and effectively.

Snow Removal Resources

- Snow removal is done by city personnel and contractors.
- All City snow removal operations are coordinated to optimize the use of snow removal resources.
- Driving and walking during snow events is inherently hazardous. The City strives to minimize the risks to the public during these periods.
- Omaha's use of contractors for snow removal is increasing. The number of residential contractors in 2010 / 2011 will be double that used in 2009 / 2010.

Snow Removal Operations

- The City applies deicing and anti-icing material when conditions warrant.
- The anti-icing agent is road salt or sodium chloride. Most of the City's salting equipment is capable of pre-wetting the salt with a mixture of brine and de-sugared molasses. The pre-wetted material stays on the pavement better and is faster acting.
- At times, sand is applied, either alone or in combination with salt.
- On the vast majority of streets, snow removal crews plow snow to the curb.
- Some streets are designated for a snow pick up operation. These are areas with on-street parking and considerable pedestrian traffic. On these streets, snow is plowed to the center, picked up and hauled off. The snow may be stored in the center of the street for a day or two before pick up operations are complete.
- There are established Business Improvement Districts (BID's) in Omaha. BID's have priority needs in some areas and the City will work with the BID's to meet these needs. Omaha strives to keep commercial districts open and operating during snow events.

Sidewalk Clearing

- Property owners are responsible for clearing public sidewalks in the right of way. These walks must be cleared within 24 hours after the City's major streets are cleared.
- Property owners are responsible for clearing private walks and private parking lots - snow must not be placed in the street. This can be hazardous if it melts and refreezes on a previously cleared street.
- Snow plowed into the street can also restrict a travel lane. The city will remove these hazards and charge the removal cost back to the responsible party.

Alleys

- The city will plow paved alleys and some unimproved alleys.
- Alley clearing will begin as plows finish work in residential areas. This would typically be 24 to 48 hours after a snowfall ends.

The City will continue to provide up-to-date and accurate information on the status of snow operations and street conditions. In addition to broadcast and print media outlets, we will expand our use of the internet and social media as a means to share information.

For information, contact the Omaha Street Maintenance Division at 444-4919.

