

COUNCIL ADOPTED WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE
TOWN OF COVENTRY
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
TOWN COUNCIL POLICY

SUBJECT: WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE AND SNOWPLOWING/SANDING OPERATIONS

The goal of the Public Works Department is to provide the best level of service possible to the residents of Coventry while remaining fiscally responsible. To accomplish this, priorities must be set within the limits of equipment, staffing, and materials being used. The Public Works Department insures that access for police, fire protection, and commuting is provided and maintained throughout the town during snow related emergencies. With over 107 miles of Town roadway, plus Association roads, work must proceed through town in a prioritized manner providing plowing and/or sanding services that result in the greatest benefit to the general population. Using these methodology main roads is at the highest priority with low volume and dead-end roads receiving attention on a lower priority.

Generally all roads have anti-icing treatment just before and as the first ½ inch of snow falls. Normally snow plowing begins when the winter event dictates. This allows the material to begin the melting process and create a brine mixture. As traffic works the material into a brine, accumulated slush is pushed off. Drivers work to keep at least one lane of road width open, two passes with the plow, to allow traffic movement. At the end of the snow activity we do additional plowing to open the roads back to the curb line. There are presently 10 assigned plow routes with each route containing approximately 13 miles of two-lane road. Each driver works within their route opening up the main roads, secondary roads, and minor roads prior to pushing back to the curb. In addition to the 10 plow routes, the Public Works Department is responsible for winter maintenance of 4 schools and 11 town facilities. This is accomplished with the schools and town facilities being distributed amongst the 10 plow routes. Fire lanes are opened and maintained during the storm and clean up is done at the end of the storm or as priority dictates. All plow routes, schools and town facilities are completed before public works personnel are released.

With the primary responsibility of the department to provide roadways clear of ice and snow it is necessary to take early preventative steps to retard the accumulation of new falling snow or freezing rain on the road surface. In most cases the anti-icing mixture needs to be spread as it starts to snow/sleet/freezing rain when the air temperature is near or below freezing or the ground surface is frozen. If the snow/sleet freezing rain begins to stick, prior to the salt/sand mixture application, it forms an extremely slick layer of ice on the road surface that makes driving hazardous and requires additional work to remove.

The need for quick action requires good communication between the police and public works departments prior to and during snow plowing/sanding operations. The normal response time for public works crews to be on the road is 45 to 60 minutes after notification. The standards of practice is as follows:

1.) Predicted Storm with Accumulations

- ❖ Request the public Safety Dispatcher to notify the operations as soon as the first frozen precipitation begins to fall.
- ❖ The public works superintendent of operations will monitor the situation and decide when to call in public works crews. The public works superintendent operations will notify the public safety dispatcher when the crews have been called and are on the road.

2.) Unpredicted storm with light or no accumulations

- ❖ Request the public safety dispatcher to notify the public works superintendent of operations as soon as the patrol officers experience slippery road conditions.

- ❖ The public works superintendent of operations will notify the public safety dispatcher when plowing/sanding operations are complete and inform them of any planned return.

3.) After public works crews have responded and secured operations

- ❖ The public works superintendent of operations will notify the public safety dispatcher when plowing/sanding operations are complete and inform them of any planned return.
- ❖ Request the public safety dispatcher to notify the public works superintendent of operations of any deterioration of conditions (freezing or drifting snow) prior to the work crew returning.

These standards of practice are intended to be used as guidelines. Each storm leaves a degree of uncertainty as to exactly when the public safety dispatcher should call the public works superintendent of operations. The watch commanders will have to use their best judgment and if unsure, should decide in the best interest of public safety.

Adopted 11/15/10