



CITY OF TOPEKA

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL POLICY

PURPOSE

The policy of the City of Topeka pertaining to Snow and Ice Control is necessary to make a clear statement of the intent of the City of Topeka winter maintenance operations and establish the priorities, standards and service levels of the snow and ice control program. This program is the responsibility of the Public Works Department and is aided by other departments within the City.

The program goal is to promote safe and efficient movement of traffic by providing snow removal and material treatment at the earliest opportunities on City streets; recognizing major factors such as type, intensity level, temperature, and wind velocity during the duration of the storm.

This is accomplished by the treatment and removal of snow and ice conditions on Emergency snow route, arterial and collector roadways. The City will manage Snow and Ice Control operations of City controlled streets and sidewalks in accordance with the established priorities and relevant City Codes. The intent of the snow and ice control program is to minimize the economic loss to the community, reduce the inconvenience and hazards of winter conditions for motorist and pedestrians, and facilitate the operation of Emergency Service vehicles.

The intent of the Snow and Ice Control Policy is to create acceptable winter driving conditions for vehicles that are properly equipped for winter driving conditions and are operated in a manner consistent with good winter driving habits. The intent is also to maintain reasonable walking conditions along City controlled sidewalks for pedestrians under normal winter conditions.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be in effect during normal winter operations when the weather conditions could cause accumulation of frost, sleet, ice, snow, or other occurrences on the streets in the City of Topeka.

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL

The depth and timing of snow accumulation, weather forecasts and traffic volumes, will normally dictate when snow plowing operations will begin. Plowing will take place during a storm as needed in an attempt to keep the accumulation on the pavement surface less than desired guidelines.

Snow plowing operations will be carried out in accordance with the guidelines established for the various street classifications as set forth in the City's Snow and Ice Operational Manual. Such plowing operations may often times be done in conjunction with ice control activities.



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The objective of ice control is to provide a safe pavement surface for vehicular traffic by attempting to prevent a build-up of snow and ice on the pavement. The City may apply liquid chemical deicers on designated street's prior to, and during storm conditions, to prevent the bonding of snow and ice to the pavement. This activity is known as anti-icing. The effectiveness of deicers used in this process is directly related to pavement temperatures.

The City will apply ice control materials in accordance with the American Public Works Association (APWA) recommendations. Application rates and locations may vary depending upon the type of storm. The Supervisor will have discretion as to what materials are used and when they are applied.

The City will typically use rock salt for deicing applications. However, under certain conditions it may be desirable to also utilize abrasives when pavement temperatures inhibit the melting action of rock salt. While abrasives do not have the ability to melt snow and ice, they may be utilized to provide traction in certain conditions. Due to the high overall cost of using abrasives and the associated environmental impacts, supervisory discretion will be used to determine if and when conditions are appropriate for applications.

PRIORITIES

In order to make the most efficient use of available resources, priorities have been established using the assumption that the severity of a storm is not beyond the normal capabilities of the City's snow and ice control resources. Depending on the nature of the weather event, deviations could occur. The established priorities are as follows:

Priority 1: Primary Streets: Arterial Streets and Emergency Snow routes

- ❖ Service Level – Plowing will typically begin with 2” of snow accumulation. Complete snow and ice control within 24 hours of snowfall ending.

Priority 2: Secondary Streets: Collector Streets

- ❖ Service Level - Plowing will typically begin with 4” of snow accumulation. Complete snow and ice control within 24 hours after Priority 1 completion.

Priority 3: Residential Streets: Local Streets

- ❖ Service Level - Plowing will typically begin with 6” of snow accumulation to ensure that they are passable to emergency services and general public as necessary upon completion of Priorities 1 through 2.

The top priorities will be constantly monitored and if snow persists we will return to those areas for plowing and/or treating.

The snow depths for plowing are guidelines and may not be adhered to for each storm event. The Public Works Director will have discretion based upon current and forecasted weather and pavement conditions.



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This Policy may be affected by at least one or more of the following events which could delay or alter snow and ice control by the City:

1. Equipment breakdown
2. Vehicles disabled in deep snow
3. Weather so severe as to cause work to be stopped for the safety of all personnel
4. Unforeseen conditions and emergencies
5. Significant medical related emergencies

POLICE/FIRE/MED-ACT EMERGENCY RESPONSE

If such a condition should arise where assistance is needed by emergency response vehicles to access a specific area, the emergency dispatcher shall contact the Supervisor. They will dispatch equipment to the address in order to clear a route in and out of that location. This would also include structure fires and other related emergencies.

DECLARATION EMERGENCY PARKING BAN

The Emergency Snow Route ordinance can be invoked by the City Manager, Public Works Director, or their designee whenever winter conditions are such that serious travel conditions may result. Emergency Snow routes are located and posted throughout the city.

The Emergency Snow Route Ordinance prohibits parking or becoming stuck without snow tires anywhere along one of the routes anytime the ordinance is activated. During this time, crews will plow these routes curb to curb and spread deicing material on the roadway. Vehicles that become stuck without snow tires or left parked along these roadways are subject to citation or tow away at the owners expense, as permitted by the ordinance. The Ordinance is attached.

CITY – RESPONSIBILITY

The City's responsibility is to treat and plow the City streets and certain sidewalks. Identified sidewalks in the public right of way are cleared by either city staff or assigned Department of Correction's inmate crews. All parking lots owned and maintained by the City, will be treated by city facility crews or a designated contractor as managed by the building manager.

Other agencies have responsibilities for roads in the City's vicinity. This includes the State of Kansas, Shawnee County, numerous townships, and private ownership.

PRIVATE – RESPONSIBILITY

Mailboxes: The adjacent resident will be responsible for cleaning snow around their mailbox to assure delivery of mail. The resident is also responsible for assuring the mailbox is properly



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installed as required by the United States Postal Service Guidelines. This requires the face of the mailbox to be installed 6” behind the back of the curb and it should be constructed to be able to withstand snow cleaning efforts by the City.

Sidewalks: All sidewalks adjacent to private and commercial property are the responsibility of the property owner.

Driveways: All driveways to private and commercial property are the responsibility of the property owner.

COMMUNICATIONS

Media notifications of emergency parking bans, snow emergency declarations, road closures, and other contact for inquiries regarding road conditions will be made by the City Communications Department.

Media communication requests should be directed to the City Media Relations Director.

CITIZEN INQUIRIES

All citizen issues concerning snow and ice control should go through the City’s call center or the City’s website. The City will respond in accordance with the priorities established in this policy.

REFERENCES

Emergency Route Map
Snow Plowing Priority Map
Ordinances/Codes



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ORDINANCES/CODES

10.55.020 Traffic emergency proclamation.

Whenever snow, freezing rain, sleet, or any other climatic conditions are such that serious travel conditions may result, the director of the public works department may declare traffic emergency. Appropriate notice of this event will be given to available broadcast media and newspapers for publication.

In the event of a traffic emergency: (a) No one shall operate a motor vehicle on an emergency snow route in such a manner or condition that such vehicle will become stalled due to the vehicle not being properly equipped with effective snow tires or chains; and (b) No vehicle shall be parked on any street designated as an emergency snow route. These prohibitions will remain in effect until the director of the public works department has terminated the traffic emergency. (Ord. 17606 § 1, 11-28-00; Code 1981 § 43-290. Code 1995 § 142-537.)

10.55.030 Establishment.

Snow routes will be designated and established with the installation of emergency snow routes sign. The director of public works shall cause appropriate signs to be installed along each emergency snow route. (Ord. 17606 § 3, 11-28-00; Ord. 16648 § 1, 10-12-93; Code 1981 § 43-292. Code 1995 § 142-539.)

10.55.040 Posting of signs.

The director of the public works department shall cause appropriate signs to be installed along each emergency snow route. (Code 1981 § 43-293. Code 1995 § 142-540.)

10.55.050 Parking of vehicles on snow route prohibited during traffic emergency.

No vehicle shall be parked on any emergency snow route during a period of driving emergency as provided in this chapter. (Code 1981 § 43-294. Code 1995 § 142-541.)

10.55.060 Driving on snow routes restricted during traffic emergency.

Until the traffic emergency is terminated by the director of the public works department, no person shall operate a motor vehicle on any emergency snow route established in this chapter in such manner or condition that such vehicle will become stalled by reason of the fact that the driving wheels of such vehicle are not equipped with tire chains or snow tires. Department as being satisfactory devices or tires for the maintenance of traction under adverse climatic and street conditions. A list of other tires and devices which are approved by the director of the public works department and by the police department shall be available for inspection at the police department and at the office of the director of the public works department. (Code 1981 § 43-295. Code 1995 § 142-542.)

14.40.010 Removal of snow or ice from public sidewalks.

(a) Residential Property. It shall be unlawful for the owner of record of real property, with a zoning use group designation of R-1, R-2, R-3 or R-4 (single-family dwelling districts) or M-1 (multiple-family dwelling districts), immediately adjacent to a public sidewalk on public right-of-way to fail to remove from the sidewalk, within 48 hours after the end of a snow or ice event, determined by the city manager or designee based on information from the National Weather Service for Topeka, any snow or ice accumulated on such sidewalk or obstructing such sidewalk. If ice has accumulated of such character as to make removal thereof impossible, the sprinkling or placement of sand, ash or other noncorrosive material thereon within the time specified for removal in such a manner as to make such sidewalk safe for travel of pedestrians shall be deemed compliance with the provisions of this chapter; provided, however, the residential property owner shall not be cited for an accumulation of snow or ice on the sidewalk when the accumulation is caused by the snow removal activity of the city, the state of Kansas, or any other political and taxing subdivision of the state.

(b) Multifamily, Commercial and Nonresidential Property. It shall be unlawful for the owner of record of real property with a zoning use group designation of M-2, M-3, M-4, or E (multiple-family dwelling districts), D&O (multiple-family dwelling and office district) or C (commercial districts), O&I (office and institutional districts), D (downtown districts) or X (mixed use districts) immediately adjacent to a public sidewalk on public right-of-way to



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fail to remove from the sidewalk, within 24 hours after the end of a snow or ice event, determined by the city manager or designee based on information from the National Weather Service for Topeka, any snow or ice accumulated on such sidewalk or obstructing such sidewalk. If ice has accumulated of such character as to make removal thereof impossible, the sprinkling or placement of sand, ash or other noncorrosive material thereon within the time specified for removal in such a manner as to make such sidewalk safe for travel of pedestrians shall be deemed compliance with the provisions of this chapter.

(c) It shall be unlawful to push, plow or otherwise move snow and/or ice which has accumulated in a public or private parking area, sidewalk, driveway, or roof onto any public sidewalk, alley, public street, private street, street right-of-way, or handicapped stall.