

CHISAGO COUNTY SNOW POLICY 2012-2013

I. POLICY STATEMENT

With the arrival of another Minnesota snow season comes the concern about access to work, school, and business. Safety for the traveling public is a main concern of the Chisago County Department of Public Works.

Our goal is to have all County Roads passable within a reasonable amount of time after a snowfall has stopped. Our plowing priorities reflect a commitment to insuring that key roads are kept open to serve critical facilities and to provide access between state highways and our communities.

Our complement of snow Plow Equipment consists of (14) fourteen truck mounted plows with sanders plus (2) two motor graders with plows. We supplement our plowing with limited applications of salt or salt/sand mix.

THE COUNTY DOES NOT ASSURE A COMPLETELY BARE ROAD AND WILL NOT NORMALLY SALT OR SAND ENTIRE SECTIONS OF ROADWAY.

Users of the highway system are reminded to exercise caution and to drive with care. It may not be possible to drive the posted speed limit at all times.

II. POLICY GUIDELINES

A. DISPATCHING OF SNOW PLOWS

The County will usually not dispatch snowplows until after a snowfall has stopped. During extended periods of snowfall, exceptions may be made. Snowplows will not be sent out in situations that are deemed by the County Engineer to be hazardous.

If snowfall stops during regular working hours, plows may be dispatched at that time. If the snowfall stops during night or early morning hours, plows will be dispatched at an early morning time according to the conditions. Weekend plowing will be handled in a similar fashion. Snowplows will normally stay off of “high traffic routes” during peak traffic hours to avoid congestion and visibility problems.

B. OPERATIONS

Generally the clearing of roads consist of following three Phases:

1. Make the road passable.
Clean one lane in each direction. Generally, a plow and wing are used.
2. Widen the lanes to edge of shoulder.
Salt/sanding may be done at problem locations on paved roads including intersections, curves, hills, and bridges. **NORMALLY ENTIRE ROAD SECTIONS WILL NOT BE SALT/SANDED.** An appropriate mixture of salt to sand is used, depending on temperature and/or the amount of snow or ice.
3. Clean up under normal circumstances.
Remove ice and slush off roadway after salt and sun have been allowed to work. Remove snow from urban areas as scheduling/demands allow.

Depending upon the situation, more than one phase may be accomplished at one time.

C. PERSONAL PROPERTIES

Chisago County Public Works will not fix or repair any damaged mailboxes/supports unless it is a Minnesota Department of Transportation approved swinging arm mailbox support and if the plow has hit the support and caused the damage. Damage from snow being plowed from the roadway or shoulder by the snow plow will not be repaired by Public Works. (See Mailbox Policy).

The County is not liable for damages to fences, vehicles, and/or other objects placed on County right of way.

The Public Works Department may assist stranded motorists by contacting law enforcement/emergency personnel. Public Works forces will not attempt to remove stuck vehicles from ditches, snowbanks or any other impediment.

D. RESIDENT PLOWING

County residents are reminded that it is unlawful under Minnesota Statue 160.2715 (A) (1) to plow snow from driveways onto or across County Roads. Piles of snow left on or near the road can freeze into a solid mass creating a hazardous situation for vehicles and snowplows. Piles of snow increase the chance of drifting snow onto the roadway. Accidents and damages caused by snow piles placed in the roadway may result in liability to the property owner.

E. INFORMATION

Questions or concerns regarding snow removal and/or road conditions should be directed to the County Highway Engineer at 651/213-8700 or to the Highway Maintenance Superintendent at 651/213-8734.