## TOOELE CITY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT <br> Revised November 2023

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## Tooele City Snow Removal Policies \& Procedures

## I. Goal

To provide the motoring public with the safest driving surface possible in an efficient and economical manner with the resources available.

## Introduction

The intent of this policy and procedures manual is to provide guidance to City staff in response to winter storm events as well as an information source to the community. Tooele City's intent during any snowstorm is to keep primary and secondary streets open and safe for the motoring public. Tooele City has more than 340 lane miles to be plowed with every winter storm, a number that increases with every new development within this growing community.

In order for a snow and ice removal program to be effective, a written policy must be established. This policy will guide personnel of the Street Division of the Public Works Department concerned with deicing, plowing, and snow removal efforts. It not only gives snow removal crews a set of guidelines to follow, but also informs the general public of the procedures being followed so they may have a better understanding of the City's snow removal efforts.

This document is the official policy for snow removal for Tooele City. All existing ordinances regarding snow removal from sidewalks, and parking regulations for snow emergencies remain in effect, and are considered a necessary part of the overall snow removal plan.

Tooele City will strive to maintain safe conditions for drivers observing winter driving conditions. However, this is not an absolute "bare pavement" policy. It must be recognized that, although this policy sets general guidelines to be followed, each storm has its own character with variable conditions such as wind, extreme temperatures, timing, duration of the storm, rate of accumulation, and moisture content, as well as potential for the Lake Effect from the Great Salt Lake. The policy must remain flexible and take into consideration these variables.

The on-call supervisors shall generally keep themselves apprised of changing weather conditions. However, the Public Works Department relies heavily on the observations of department personnel and various Internet weather sites to alert them to road conditions, impending weather, and changing conditions any time of the day. Weather reports issued by the National Weather Service will also aid in preparation of snow and ice control deployments.

The implementation of the policy shall be dictated by actual road and weather conditions. The responsibility for implementing this policy, determining the storm categories, and the assignment of personnel and equipment for winter operations shall be with the Mayor or Public Works Director.

## II. Emergency Declarations

The Mayor of Tooele City maintains the right and responsibility for the declaration of a snow emergency outside of this policy. This policy is not intended to be the determiner of a snow emergency or its declaration but may act as an aid in such determinations and a part of the response effort to such an emergency declaration.

## Priorities

A limited amount of resources and the need to provide the greatest safety and benefit to the traveling public in the most efficient manner necessitate that priority be given to certain streets above others. Streets with higher traffic volume have a higher priority for snow removal service. Streets, with lower traffic volume (i.e. subdivisions and cul-de-sacs) have the lowest priority. In addition to primary and secondary streets, priorities are given to streets adjacent to hospitals, police, fire and EMS stations, schools, bus routes, and dangerous intersections, hills, or curves. As a result, City streets have been divided into four priority categories as follows:

Priority 1: $\quad$ - These are arterial and most larger collector streets and streets adjacent to hospitals, police, fire, and EMS stations. - These are generally smaller collector streets, streets adjacent to schools, bus routes, and street with dangerous intersections, hills, or curves.
Priority 2: - All other residential through streets, excluding cul-de-sacs, alleys, and dead-end streets.

Please refer to the Streets Priority Map at the end of this policy to see a complete depiction of street priority assignments.

## Storm Classifications

The conditions that accompany any storm can change rapidly during the storm and can vary significantly from forecasts. For this reason, at the onset of a storm, the Mayor and/or Public Works Director will make an initial determination of the magnitude of the storm based on forecasting and information available, assign it a category, and deploy City crews in response accordingly. Throughout the course of the storm, the Mayor and/or Public Works Director will regularly evaluate forecasting, conditions, and all information available. Based on that information they may reassign the storm to different categories and adjust the crew's efforts and response accordingly. Tooele City uses four generalized storm categories, defined as follows:

Category I-0"-4" of snow accumulation and/or storm duration up to four hours. All Priority 1 and 2 streets are anticipated to be cleared at least once with additional clearing for Priority 1 streets as needed. Additional emphasis will be placed on bus routes, around schools, hazardous stops, hills and curved streets, dangerous intersections, hospitals, and all emergency facilities. Street will be treated with deicing material as necessary.

Category II-4" - 8" of snow accumulation and/or storm duration up to eight hours.
All Priority 1 and 2 streets are anticipated to be cleared at least once with additional clearing for Priority 1 streets as needed. Priority 2 streets will generally only be plowed as time permits until after the storm ends. Additional emphasis will be placed on bus routes, around schools, hazardous stops, hills and curved streets, dangerous intersections, hospitals, and all emergency facilities. Street will be treated with de-icing material as necessary.

Category III - 8" - 12" of snow accumulation and/or storm duration up to 12 hours.
All Priority 1 and 2 streets are anticipated to be cleared at least once with additional clearing for Priority 1 streets as needed. Priority 2 streets will generally only be plowed as time permits until after the storm ends. Additional emphasis will be
placed on bus routes, around schools, hazardous stops, hills and curved streets, dangerous intersections, hospitals, and all emergency facilities. Street will be treated with de-icing material as necessary.

Category IV - 12" or more of snow accumulation and/or storm duration of more than 12 hours. All Priority 1 streets and selected Priority 2 streets are anticipated to be cleared continually throughout the storm. Some Priority 2 streets will generally only be plowed as time permits until after the storm ends. Street will be treated with deicing material as necessary.

Please refer to the attached Streets Priority Map for an outline of primary and secondary routes.

## III. OPERATIONS - Driver Rotation

Tooele City currently operates 11 snow plows to address its plowing needs. Considering the number of lane miles within the City, it takes approximately 12 hours for the snow plows operating full capacity to plow every street in the City one time. The members of the Streets Division crew implementing this policy maintain the required commercial driver licenses (CDL) to operate City plows.

The City's snow plow crew operates under an exemption from the driver regulations of CDL licensure under Section $390.3(\mathrm{f})(2)$ of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations meaning that City snow plow drivers are not required to comply with
hours of service and all other CDL driver regulations except the requirement to maintain CDL licensure. Even with this exception, hours of service regulations on CDL licenses can provide quality guidance for driver rotation in the event of a prolonged winter storm event. CDL hours of service regulations specify that after ten hours of time off, drivers are allowed to work up to 14 hours, up to 11 hours of which can be behind the wheel, before another ten hours of time off. The City desires to utilize the most efficient snow plowing service possible without jeopardizing the safety of the City's crews. Therefore, in the event of a Category III or IV storm, and possibly some Category II storms, it may be necessary to rotate snow plow drivers and implement the use of supplemental drivers from other divisions of the Public Works Department to maintain plowed roads through the duration of a storm and minimize down times.

Section 383.3(d)(3)(i) of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations specify that when driving is done for the purpose of removing snow or ice from a roadway by plowing, sanding, or salting, commercial vehicles can be operated without the requirement for the drivers to have a commercial driver license. Even with this added exemption, the City will utilize CDL drivers from other Public Works divisions whenever possible for supplemental drivers. In such cases, the Mayor and/or Public Works Directors shall have the discretion to implement a driver rotation according to the following:

1. Eight Hour Check. Approximately eight hours after the first dispatching of snow plows, a determination is made as to the anticipated duration and intensity of the storm still to come. If that determination is that plowing can be maintained and priority roads kept clear through the remainder of the 12 -hour driving term and at least an 8 -hour down time break, the snow plow crews can be allowed to complete the work and be released from duty at the end of the 12 -hour driving term.
2. Rotation. In the event that the eight hour check determines that plowing is not likely to be maintained and priority roads kept clear through the remainder of the 12 -hour driving term and at least an 8-hour down time break, the Mayor and/or Public Works Director may have half of the crew released from duty at the eight hour check to begin an 8-hour break while
the other half of the crew continues plowing with emphasis on Priority 1 streets for the remainder of their shift. The Streets Division supervisor will have the flexibility to determine those crew members who will continue working and those that will released from duty first. Considerations that may be used in this determination include seniority, snow plow experience, and whether or not drivers are supplemental drivers for an absent member of the Streets crew. At the end of the 12 -hour driving term the remaining on-duty drivers will be sent home for their 8 -hour down time break and a determination is made as to the likelihood of having the half of the crew that completed an 8-hour shift returning in two hours for another rotation. Two hours later a final determination will be made regarding the return of the 8 -hour shift. If that half of the crew is recalled for another shift, that shift will last for no longer than six hours and may be supplemented by the return of the 12 -hour shift half of the crew two hours later for a maximum of four additional hours. The entire Streets Division crew will then be required to serve another 8 -hour break time.
3. Supplemental Drivers. Should a winter storm have a duration and intensity where there are plowing needs continually beyond the full rotation of the Streets Division snow plow crew or additional drivers needed during the drivers' break periods, the Mayor and/or Public Works Director may call upon CDL drivers from other divisions of the Public Works Department to perform a 6-hour plowing shift until the Streets Division crew is rested and can perform a second rotation. Supplemental drivers may also be used at any time in the event that one or more members of the Streets Division crew is not available due to scheduled time off, illness, or any other reason to ensure that the available snow plows are operating.

This rotation cycle assumes that storms begin simultaneously with the start of the Streets crew's normal work schedule. This will not always be the case. Storms may set in before the start of the crew's normal schedule potentially resulting in insufficient rest time for the drivers prior to starting plowing operations. Storms may also set in after the start of the crew's normal schedule potentially resulting in extended work schedules beyond that of the basic rotation timeline. In the event of either scenario, the Public Works Director and/or Mayor reserve the right to truncate the overall rotation timeline by cutting hours off of the front of the rotation timeline to the degree necessary ensure plowing efficiency and the safety of the crew. Although a rotation of this type presents the possibility for inequalities in the hours worked between members of the Streets Division crew should a rotation cycle not sustain through the entire 24 -hour primary rotation. The Streets Division supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that inequalities are balanced out to the greatest degree possible during the next extended winter storm event.



## Street Clearing

Clearing snow from City streets can typically be done in one of two ways. Plows can push snow towards the sides of the street or to the center. Pushing snow to the sides of the street provides for a more cleared street but can place a greater burden on neighboring property owners through the need to clear that snow to maintain access to and from their property. Pushing snow towards the center of the street reduces the burden on neighboring property owners but can provide less of a cleared street with a windrow in the median that could act as a barrier restricting left turn movements. With each method providing its own benefits and drawbacks, it is the intent to plow snow towards the sides of streets as a primary method with the option to plow towards the center. In the event of larger winter storm events, especially Category III or IV storms, or on low priority streets, it is preferable to plow towards the center of the street.

## Low Priority Streets

During major storms, traffic on low-priority streets usually causes the snow to become packed or icy before it can be plowed. When snow has become compacted on low-priority streets and plowing is ineffective, operations may be discontinued until regular working hours. The goal in plowing for low priority streets is to simply provide a plowed lane in each direction of travel, as time allows to do so.

## Salting

The City budget does not always allow for salting Priority 2 streets. Once operations have begun, salting will continue until the selected streets have traction restored. Due to limited salt storage, and delivery capacities, or when more snow is predicted, salting may be reduced or halted to conserve salt.

## Street Closures

If storm conditions warrant the Police Department, Fire Department, or Public Works Director may determine it necessary to close streets or portions of streets that are determined to be impassable or overly dangerous. All such closures will be immediately reported to the Mayor. Streets may also be closed during storms at the direction of the Mayor, for safety reasons. We are aware this may cause an inconvenience to the traveling public. However, storms which are of such a magnitude to create such conditions, they could be beyond the capabilities of the City's resources or may occur so rapidly to limit response abilities and therefore may necessitate closures.

## IV. Solid Waste Collection

The solid waste collection contractor will decide whether or not it is safe for their trucks to pick up during or
immediately following a storm. If the contractor delays pick up, the service will be performed or made up as scheduled by the contractor. Questions and concerns about regarding solid waste collection should be directed to the collections contractor.

## V. On-Street Parking

Tooele City Code Section 10-3-6 states (1) It shall be unlawful to park a vehicle on any public right-of-way: (a) when snow is falling upon that vehicle; or, (b) when snow or ice have accumulated in any amount on the right-of-way upon which that vehicle is parked. (2) Any vehicle parked in violation of this Section may be removed at the discretion of the Tooele City Police Department for creating public safety risks and for obstructing the City's snow removal efforts.
(3) The following are exempt from this Section:
(a) emergency vehicles and personnel in the performance of their functions and duties; and,
(b) Tooele City public works vehicles and employees in the performance of their functions and duties.
(Ord. 2021-09, 09-01-2021) (2020-21, 05-06-2020) (2019-31, 12-04-2019) (Ord. 2019-11, 04-17-2019) (Ord. 1990-08, 06-14-1990)
In anticipation of impending snow storms, it is strongly recommended that citizens prepare in advance to have vehicles parked off of the street regardless of the time of day. It is dangerous and difficult to plow streets clogged with parked vehicles. Some streets, especially cul-de-sacs may not be plowed, if plows cannot safely drive down them. The most helpful thing residents can do to facilitate snow removal is to move their vehicles off the street, and encourage others to do the same. Residents can also help by removing trailers, portable basketball standards, and garbage cans, all of which should not be parked or stored in the street anyway, from the street anytime snow plows are out working. Snow removal in inclement weather is challenging enough on a "clear" road and these obstacles only increase the difficulty of the crews doing their work.

## VI. Snow Blowing

Blowing, throwing, or pushing snow from driveways and walks into the street creates additional work for snow plow operators, and may create a traffic hazard and is in direct violation of Tooele City Code Section 4-11-17. Some business and residents have pushed large piles of snow onto the street, hoping it would melt quickly. The snow pile is a hazard itself, but the ice created when the melting snow refreezes can create an
 even more dangerous situation. Snow is recommended to be thrown onto landscaped areas in the yard or parking lot or otherwise accommodated outside of the public right-of-way.

## VII. Cul-De-Sacs, Alleys \& DEAD-END Streets

There are over 170 cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets in Tooele City in addition to numerous more alleys. The City incurs proportionally more time and costs clearing snow from these streets than typical "uninterrupted" stretches of streets. Because of the high cost-to-benefit ratio and lower traffic volume, cul-de-sacs, alleys, and dead-end streets have the lowest priority and will be the last areas addressed. If these streets become snow packed, they may not be cleared to the same extent as other streets. Streets in subdivisions will be slick and travelers will need to exercise caution and travel at a lower speed. It is the City's intent that cul-de-sacs, alleys, and dead-end streets will be cleared, but it will likely be after a storm ends, could possibly be several days after a storm ends based on the severity of the storm, and could be unnecessary based on how quickly the snow melts.

In an effort to become more efficient, crews will, when feasible, use the following standard in plowing snow in cul-de-sacs, alleys, and dead-end streets:

1. For cul-de-sacs, one full pass will be made around the perimeter of the cul-de-sac with snow pushed to the center for at least the "bowl" portion of the cul-de-sac.


This will create an island of snow in the middle of the bowl with a passable travel lane around the outside of the cul-de-sac bowl. As time allows after a heavy snow, the snow will be plowed out of the center of the cul-de-sac bowl and/or dispersed to the sides of the street.
2. Dead end streets will be plowed to the end of the street with the snow stockpiled in the street beyond the last driveway to the greatest degree possible.
3. Alleys will be plowed with a single pass down the center of the alley with snow pushed generally to one side or the other, at the discretion of the plow driver.

## VIII. Sidewalks and Public Property

Tooele City property owners are responsible for keeping all sidewalks along their property clear of snow and ice according to Tooele City Code Section 4-11-17. The City requires residents to clear their sidewalks within 24 hours after a snowstorm. Snow removed from sidewalks and driveways should be placed in the park strip area or on private property and NOT in the public roads. City crews are responsible for clearing sidewalks at City facilities such as the City Hall, police and fire stations, the Pratt Aquatic Center, and the library. The City also performs sidewalk clearing in certain parts of the Downtown District. The City also clears parking lots at City facilities. Parking lots at City facilities are general cleared by Parks and Recreation Department crews as a means to maintain the focus of the Streets crew plowing efforts on public streets.

## IX. Driveways

Snow moved by a snow plow blade generally has no place to go towards the edge of the street. Many times snow plowing leaves piles of snow in front of driveway entrances, which may create hardships for residents. However, the City possesses neither the personnel nor equipment to clear the thousands of driveway approaches within the City. Snow removal of the driveway approaches is the residents' responsibility. No private driveways or parking lots will be plowed by Street Division crews. It is normal and expected that some snow and ice may be deposited in front of private driveway entrances by normal plowing operations. This will not be removed by Streets Division crews.


## X. Mail Delivery

In most cases, damage occurs during the plowing process because aged posts or improperly mounted boxes are unable to withstand the rigors of the winter plowing season. The City may replace the mailbox and/or post if it is actually struck and damaged by a snow plow, considered on a case-by-case basis. Mailboxes should be installed to withstand heavy or wet snow coming off the end of the plow. The final cleaning adjacent to mailboxes is the responsibility of the property owner. If damage occurs due to snow discharge or snow storage, the City will not be responsible for repairs.

## XI. Fire Hydrants

There are more than 1,600 fire hydrants throughout Tooele City, a number that grows with every new development. During this time of year, we can expect that snow and snow removal activities may cause snow to be piled near fire hydrants and obstruct their access. It is important for residents and businesses located near fire hydrants to keep this in mind and take action during their personal snow removal activities. It is recommended that a clear space of at least three feet be maintained around the circumference of fire hydrants to permit easy access in emergencies. Keeping hydrants clear also aids the fire department in reducing response times in the area when emergencies arise.

## XII. Streets Plowed by Other Parties

State highways are plowed by the Utah Department of Transportation. These streets include: Main Street (State Road 36)
1000 North west of Main Street (State Road 112)
Utah Avenue (State Road 112) north and west of 1000 North

Some streets fall under the jurisdiction of Tooele County and are therefore generally plowed by the county. These streets include:

1200 West in the area of the City Waste Water Treatment Plant Droubay Road north of Pine Canyon Road Pine Canyon Road east of Droubay Road South Mountain Drive

Streets on and leading to the Tooele Army Depot are plowed by the Army. These streets include: Commander Boulevard

Private streets throughout the community are plowed by private contractors by arrangement of the party responsible for those streets. Please refer to the Streets Priority Map at the end of this policy for a complete representation of streets not plowed by Tooele City.

## XIII. Property Damage Claims

Snow plowing and ice control operations have potential to result in property damage, particularly during more intense storm conditions or during nighttime snow plowing. Incidents involving contact between City equipment and private property typically occur within the public street right-of-way, which commonly extends beyond the adjoining sidewalk. The intent of the right-ofway is to provide for snow storage, utilities, sidewalks, and other City uses.


Homeowners are permitted to place some improvements, such as mailboxes, within the right-of-way. In the event of damage to private property during snow removal efforts, the property owner may file a claim with the City Attorney's Office, by calling 435-843-2120. The damage will then be investigated to determine if any damage is the City's responsibility. It is recommended that photographs be taken before and after damage occurs whenever possible to help in determining the extent of damage, condition of the property damages, and an estimated value of the damaged property.
The weight of accumulating snow may cause tree limbs to break, or other damage to structures. Such damage is the responsibility of the resident and their insurance company.

## XIV. SAFETY TIPS

- When trucks are plowing snow and spreading salt. Stay back from the vehicle a minimum of 100 feet to avoid problems.
- Plow trucks often have to back up. There are blind spots in the mirrors. For your safety, do not pull up directly behind them. They may not be able to see you.
- When cleaning driveways or parking lots, do not put snow in the street. This can cause problems for other motorists and is a violation of Tooele City Code Section 4-11-17.
- Plow trucks generally push snow to the passenger side of the truck (right side when looking at the plow from the rear). Never attempt to pass a truck on the right since there can be much more snow on that side of the vehicle.
- Snow plow blades are generally wider than the vehicle they are attached to in order to maximize the effort to clear the road. Never attempt to pass a snow plow vehicle in order to avoid vehicle damage.



## XV. Frequently Asked Questions

## What can I do if I am elderly and can't shovel snow from my sidewalk or drive approach?

When a resident is physically unable to perform snow removal arrangements should be made with a relative, friend or neighbor, for help.

## Why doesn't the city plow residential streets after every storm?

City policy is that residential streets are plowed during or after a storm according to the category of the storm, priority designation of the street, and only after the primary and secondary routes are completely cleared. For more information, please refer to the priorities established and discussed in this Policy. To identify the street of a higher priority that's closest to where you are, please refer to the Streets Priority Map.

Why do the plows cover over the areas I just shoveled? Am I responsible for those areas? Snow plow drivers will make every effort to avoid plowing snow onto sidewalks and driveway entrances. However, in the process of removing snow from roadways there may be times that this cannot be avoided and sidewalks or driveway entrances may become covered. Residents' responsibilities are outlined in the City Code Section 4-11-17 and include removal of all snow or ice from the sidewalks and driveways within 24 hours of the end of a storm

My neighbors never clear their sidewalk. What can I do? All property owners are required by City Code to clear their sidewalk within 24 hours of the end of a storm. If you are concerned about uncleared sidewalks, you can contact Code Enforcement at 435-882-8900.

Who is responsible for clearing the sidewalk in front of my home?

The Tooele City Code requires that all property
 owners clear the sidewalks in front of their property within 24 hours after a storm. Sidewalks in front of City facilities and in the downtown area are cleared by the Parks and Recreation Department. They can be reached at 435-843-2143.

## What material does the city use for de-icing the streets?

The City uses primarily de-icing salt on the roads. Sand is not used on the roads due to the high cost and substantial environmental impact. City crews are trained on sensible salting techniques, and all snow plow trucks are calibrated to spread only the amount of de-icing salt required to de-ice the roadways.

## Who do I call to report problems with snow removal?

You should contact the Streets Division at 435-843-2130, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00
p.m. or after hours call dispatch at 435-882-5600. You may also email
publicworks@tooelecity.gov
If you encounter an emergency situation, call 911.

Why are only portions of the street plowed on residential streets?
When conditions warrant, residential streets may only be plowed enough to give residents access to the highest priority streets. Plowing from curb to curb is not always practical because it would require more time and moving of many vehicles that park on the streets. When plowing down the middle of residential streets is required, piles of snow called "windrows" are often created that can block private driveway entrances. Clearing the snow from driveway entrances is the responsibility of the property owner.

I saw a City snow plow driving around during the storm with its blade up. Why wasn't it plowing? It is the goal of the city to plow streets systematically and efficiently. When snow plows are moving from one location to another, or returning to refuel or have more de-icing material loaded onto the truck, they travel with their plow blades up. Additionally, where agencies other than the City maintains some roads within city limits, it is their responsibility to plow those roads and the City's snow plows therefore cannot.

## The Post Office has told me they will not deliver mail because of the snow in front of the mailboxes. What will the City do?

The sidewalks around cluster mailboxes are the responsibility of either the homeowners associations or the property owners adjacent to the boxes. The clearing of sidewalks around mailboxes at individual resident properties is the responsibility of the property owner. It is not the City's intent to pile snow from the plows so that it blocks mailboxes but there may be situations where this happens. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner to ensure that mailboxes are cleared for mail delivery.

## What can I do to prepare for a severe winter storm, and what do I do if I am trapped in a storm situation?

Heavy snowfall and extreme cold can immobilize an entire city or region. Areas that normally experience mild winters can be hit with a major snowstorm or extreme cold. The impacts include closed roads highways, blocked roads, downed power lines, and hypothermia. Protect yourself and your household from the many hazards of winter by planning ahead by stocking supplies of food, warm clothing, blankets, candles and other items to maintain warmth and nourishment for an extended period of time. Residents can also make arrangement to minimize driving during winter storms to keep streets as open as possible for snow plowing efforts.

## Snow Plow Routes



