

Williston Public Works Department

Winter Operations Snow & Ice Removal Plan

The Williston Public Works Department is preparing for the annual Winter Season. Vermont is famous for its variety of weather conditions and they all come in extremes. The following information is provided to give an overview of the department's mission within the community in providing winter plowing services.

It is the intent of this plan to provide for "safe and passable" roadways through the winter months. Motorists should be prepared to drive for the conditions and allow extra time to reach their destination.

The responsibility of maintaining the local transportation network making it safe and passable rests with the Public Works Department. However, successful battles against the onslaught of winter storm conditions also require the cooperation and informed assistance of all citizens. This plan outlines the snow removal procedure of the Williston Public Works Department and offers suggestions on how you can help. It briefly describes how together we can minimize the impact of winter storms on our daily lives.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation maintains the State roads and can be reached at 655-1580. The Vermont Agency of Transportation is responsible for the following roadways in Williston:

- Route 2A – Essex Road and St. George Road
- Route 2 – Williston Road
- Interstate 89

The Town of Williston is responsible for winter maintenance on approximately 73 miles of public roads and streets, along with approximately 9 miles of sidewalks and paths. Our fleet of winter maintenance vehicles consists of five, 7 cubic yard dump trucks and two, 4 cubic yard dump trucks with plows, wing plows, material spreaders, and a sidewalk plow with a blower and a v-plow. Individual truck plow routes average 3-4 hours per unit depending on the storm.

Late evening and over night snow removal operations are generally done on major connectors and heavily traveled Town highways with one or two trucks providing service. This is done to allow the majority of our resources to clean and open all highways to school bus and commuter traffic before school opens and commuter traffic begins.

What affects the implementation of this plan:

- Timing of the storm
- Temperature (air & surface)
- The amount and type of precipitation received
- Duration of the storm event
- Equipment breakdowns

*Note: No two storms are ever the same.

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL PLAN

Sand and Salting Operations:

When winter precipitation starts and anywhere from 1/4" – 1/2" of snow accumulates, the Public Works Department dispatches approximately 7 trucks, dispensing salt to keep precipitation from freezing on pavement. Sand application is mainly applied to gravel surfaced roads. The majority of our salt resources are applied to the Town's main highways and commuter routes. Limited salt application is applied to the lower speed, lower traffic volume routes.

Full Scale Plowing Operations:

Operations are conducted over 7 designated routes. Within each route, certain streets are designated as primary routes to be opened first so all areas of town can be reached by snow removal crews and emergency vehicles. After all streets are opened, the drivers may begin to "push back" the accumulated snow to the curb/shoulder line to gain maximum width of the road surface. This work is vital on narrow streets because in Vermont another storm is never far behind. If widening out is not done as soon as possible, the banks of snow may freeze and become impossible to move at a later time. This opening up and pushing back may take place more than once during a major storm event.

How You Can Help:

During extreme winter storm events, YOU CAN HELP by staying off the roads unless it is absolutely necessary and by not parking in the street. If urgent business or an emergency requires you to be on the streets during this stage, be sure your vehicle is equipped with snow tires. Also, it would be wise to wait until plowing is finished before shoveling, to avoid having your hard work being undone with the next pass of the snow plow.

Winter plowing operations are far more effective if residents refrain from parking on the street during winter storm events. Vehicles parked in the roadway during winter storm events cause delays in performing winter maintenance operations by either causing operators to wait or requiring second trips to clear the streets.

Refrain from blowing, plowing or shoveling snow into the street. This practice creates a safety issue for other motorists using the streets or roadways. Please remember Williston has a Winter Parking Ban on Town Streets beginning December 1st through April 1st between the hours of 11:00pm and 7:00am.

Please make sure your mailbox and post are in good repair in conformance with the U.S. Postal Service standards prior to cold weather. Your mail box will have to withstand the long winter of flying snow as a result of plowing operations. The bottom of the box should be 42" to 48" off the ground and no part of the box should be over the shoulder of the road.

Path and Sidewalk Plowing Operations:

The Williston Public Works Department presently plows approximately 9 miles of the 19 miles of public paths and sidewalks it owns. The Williston Selectboard has a written policy that determines a process for adding additional segments to the winter operation plan. See the Town's website at: www.town.williston.vt.us for more information.

In general roadway and street clearing takes precedence over path and sidewalk clearing. However, the Department attempts to begin path and walk clearing within 24 hours of a storm event.

VTrans Safe Winter Driving Tips:

- Drive according to road conditions.
- Slow Down: Driving too fast on wintry roads is the leading cause of accidents.
- Travel at a safe distance of at least 3 car lengths from the vehicle ahead of you, leaving plenty of room to stop.
- Do not crowd slow moving maintenance and emergency vehicles.
- Do not use cruise control while driving on snow covered roads or during a storm.
- Do not overestimate the capabilities of your four-wheel drive vehicle.
- Clear all snow and ice from the vehicle prior to travel.
- Be aware of black ice on what appears to be bare pavement.

If you have questions regarding the Winter Operations Snow and Ice Removal Plan, please feel free to contact Bruce K. Hoar, Public Works Director, by email at: bhoar@willistontown.com or by phone at 878-1239. Williston Public Works hopes you have a wonderful and safe winter season.