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On the Road in New Hampshire

Dover's Snow Removal Ride-Along Program

The Community Services Department in Dover has taken an innovative approach to their public relations program. They have developed a Ride-Along program, which allows residents to ride with public works operators during snow removal.

Dover began the Ride-Along program two years ago. According to Michael Bobinsky, Community Services Director, in Dover, "the program offers citizens an opportunity to get up close and personal to the city's snow removal plan. The idea is to better educate the public, allowing them to have a better appreciation of public works."

The resident's image of public works is then based on knowledge and not on assumptions. One downtown merchant rode along two years ago and still tells his customers of his positive experience.

As Bobinsky says, The program provides the public with an opportunity to see how snow 'goes away' and the importance of parking bans on snow removal." They also get to see how pedestrians and mailboxes interfere with snow removal.

The Community Services Department considered what they want the public to understand about snow removal, and developed a plan to educate them. For liability reasons, the resident signs a general waiver before riding in the truck.

After residents return from plowing, they have the opportunity to discuss what they saw. A supervisor explains the City's snow removal plan, emphasizing salt and sand routes and the sidewalk and street plowing routes. Safety precautions used in the snow removal process are explained. The briefing includes information about the use of chemicals in anti/de-icing, and the weather forecasting system is discussed.

Local newspapers have published information about the program each year. Residents are urged to contact the city to participate.

For more information about this program, contact the UNH T² Center.

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