

Town of Amherst, NH

Standard Operating Procedure

Winter Operations

Snow Removal and Ice Control Procedures

(Includes Highway, Sidewalks, Transfer Station and Parking Areas)

Equipment: The Highway Department utilizes all the assets needed to address snow emergencies. A list of the current rolling stock assets is included in the appendix.

Routes: Currently, the town is divided into nineteen plow routes and fifteen treatment routes. Our four 35,000 gross vehicle weight trucks, one 55,000 gross vehicle weight truck, and one ton all have mounted hydraulic powered sanders, a plow and wing is mounted on the grader and our pickups have front plows. Major arteries and school bus routes are prioritized as much as possible.

Manpower: Full-time town employees from solid waste division and recreation personnel assigned to its winter maintenance operations, supplement the highway division of "Public Works" for various aspects of winter road maintenance. In addition, private contractors under contractual agreement with the Town of Amherst are used to plow and treat town roads and parking lots.

Materials: The department uses approximately fifteen hundred tons of salt and four thousand cubic yards of sand each season. Ledge sand is used as an abrasive for dirt roads and is applied to improve the public's motor vehicle traction. On paved roads sand is mixed with salt and dribbled in the middle of the road (where traffic allows) creating a liquid super salt (brine) effect. Department employs salt, calcium chloride, and non-toxic "Ice-b-gone" as de-icing and anti-icing agents. Our sand supply is bid each year and is trucked to our storage shed following the bid specification requirements throughout the winter season. Rock salt is purchased as needed from a supplier through state bid pricing. A limited quantity of approximately six hundred ton of salt is stockpiled under cover at the Highway Complex.

Unless weather conditions require a different approach, winter maintenance routes are usually treated with a mixture of sand and salt. The mixture is maintained at a minimum of one part salt to one part sand. The mixture is applied as close to the center of the roadway as possible, where traffic can work the mix traveling either way (this sometimes requires spreading the material). The mixture, in conjunction with traffic action, creates a watery brine melting snow and / or ice, and resisting snow and ice packing on the roadway. The road crown further assists with the spreading of the mixture brine. Depending on temperatures decreasing and other weather conditions, the Public Works Director or his designee will make the determination as to when to stop applying salt and change to other add mixtures that are available for use at the

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time. Four municipal spreaders are capable of adding calcium chloride and other potential add mixtures to the brine mixture increasing the effectiveness at lower temperatures.

The following roads are designated " no Salt Zones" and treated with salt alternatives:

- Waterview Drive
- Brook Road
- Rhodora Drive
- Tamarack lane
- Upham Road in 100 feet from Spring Road intersection to County Road.

Communications: The Public Works rolling stock is equipped with two-way radios capable of transmitting and receiving on a frequency of 39.50. Each employee is assigned a unique call number. Most private contractors working for the town communicate with DPW using cell phones. A list of all call numbers is included as an appendix to this policy. The Amherst Highway Department maintains communications from our garage during winter emergencies.

Schools: The Highway Department is responsible for the clearing of snow and winter treatment of the district schools access roads and parking lots. This is accomplished with three pieces of town equipment and one hired. On days when school is in session, winter maintenance efforts must be timed to coincide with bus routing and delivery.

The school superintendent or designated official representative shall contact the Public Works Department to determine the condition of the municipality's roads in order to determine the safety of students using school buses prior to 4:30 AM. The school representative shall make the decision to cancel or postpone school for that day.

Parking: The Town has enacted a winter parking ban effective from November 1st to April 1st of each year. This ban prohibits parking in or on the town's roads or right-of- ways. The Town has the right to tow at the owners expense. The purpose of the winter parking ban is to allow winter maintenance crews unobstructed snow removal and ice control routes, as much as possible, to maintain the maximum effectiveness of their efforts

Plow Route Priorities: With a total of 120 miles of town roads from which to remove snow and ice and nineteen pieces of equipment to handle these responsibilities,

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the Highway Department has to assign priorities for winter maintenance route activity in order to maximize the effectiveness of their efforts for the motoring public.

- School bus routes will be given the first priority during school days. Each plow route will ensure that the best possible snow clearance will be completed within one half hour of bus route time.
- Public parking areas at the Town Office, Town Hall, Library, Police Station, and Fire Station will be maintained by plowing during the winter storm. The application of slip resistant materials will be applied after the storm as determined by the Lead Foreman or his designee.
- Transfer Station / Recycling Center: Transfer Station personnel may be required to assist with the town's general winter maintenance operations. If the facility is open during the snow or ice storm, personnel will plow this area prior to opening for public use. Public areas shall be kept as clear as possible to provide as safe access as is reasonably possible.
- Sand and other slip resistant materials shall be used in public areas. It often will not be possible to maintain clear ground, but a reasonable effort will be made during storms.
- Each specific plow route list is attached to this policy and subject to change.

Roads not receiving winter Maintenance: The town of Amherst does not maintain a number of roadways as part of its ongoing winter maintenance activities. The areas not maintained by the Town includes:

- Town roads classified as Class VI roads.
- Private roads

Damage to Private Property: It should be noted that the municipality isn't held responsible for damage to private property that is located within the public right of way. The right of way (ROW) is often 50' wide, and is often confused by property owners as their own property. In most cases, the ROW extends ten to twenty feet on either side of the paved or gravel road. Homeowners cultivate extensions of their lawns, place mailboxes, erect fences or stonewall in these areas, which improves the appearance of the street greatly, but is obstructive to good maintenance from being conducted on the roadway.

Homeowners should not put bark mulch, crushed rock, stone walls, fences (visible and invisible), irrigation systems, trees or lawns in the town right-of-way. The town is not liable for damage that may occur to property in its right-of-way. Many items interfere

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with heavy equipment and become a hazard for vehicles and pedestrians. They often cause drainage failures, and thereby road deterioration.

Location of Mailboxes: Mail and newspaper boxes are allowed, at the owner's risk within the right-of-way for purposes of convenience. United States Postal bulletin 22102 states

"The Postal Service suggests using a semi-arch or extended arm support which allows snowplows to sweep near or under mailboxes without damaging supports and provides easy access to the mailboxes by carriers and customers."

The following suggestions for reducing the possibility of damage and liability:

- Mailboxes should be installed at least three feet from the edge of pavement
- Installations should be sufficiently sturdy to withstand the weight of heavy snow resulting from plowing operations.

Parking Ban: Pursuant to the provisions of RSA Chapter 41, Section 11 and RSA Chapter 47, Section 17, the following regulation is hereby established for the Town of Amherst.

From November 1st to April 1st of each year, no person shall park any motor vehicle on any public highway at any time in such a manner as to impede snow plowing, snow removal or road surface treatment operations

Information regarding vehicles found impeding winter operations by the Town of Amherst Department of Public Works or independent contractors engaged by the Director of Public Works will be turned over to the Amherst Police Department for disposition.

Any vehicle parked in violation may be authorized to be towed by the Chief of Police or his designee. Any vehicles towed shall be stored and released to the owner only upon payment of the cost of towing (as established by the towing firm).

Any person violating the parking ban shall be subject to a penalty not to exceed \$50.00 for each offence in addition to any other costs associated with the removal of the vehicles.

Adopted December 19, 2002

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Placing Snow upon Streets and Roads

Any person who shall put or place or cause to be put or placed any snow or ice upon the surface of the traveled portion of any Class V or Class IV highway or town-maintained portion of a Class II highway for any purpose, shall be guilty of a violation if a natural person, or guilty of a misdemeanor of any other person except with written Town approval by the Director of Public Works or his designation.

Any person violating these by-laws shall be subject to a penalty not exceeding the following: (1) First Offence – written warning (2) Second Offence - \$50.00 penalty (3) Third Offence - \$100 penalty.

This ordinance adopted December 19, 2002

Post Storm Operations: As determined by the Director of Public Works or his designee, the snow banks resulting from the previous accumulations shall be pushed back, or shelved, using the plow and wings of the dump trucks, grader, or other suitable equipment to make space for future snow storms.

Sidewalk Snow Removal:

Several sidewalks were constructed at the outer edge of the right-of-way creating a conflict between snow removal equipment and some structures such as fences. Every effort is made to minimize damage to private property. Should damage occur, after inspection, public works personnel will negotiate extent of repairs.

- Sidewalk snow removal will be done as soon as possible within the limitations of manpower, equipment, and storm size.
- If there are insufficient personnel available to conduct sidewalk snow removal operations, as well as street and road clearance, the streets and roads shall take priority.
- The sidewalks will be treated with salt, sand, or liquid deicer as quickly as possible after the storm if required.

Priority:

1. Snow removal of the sidewalk from the Clark School to the Wilkins School and from the Village Store to the Library. Also the sidewalk from Carriage Lane to Main Street in front of the Library.

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2. Front of Town Hall – clean off the sidewalk from Town Hall over to the parking area in front of the old cemetery. Clean off steps at the Town Hall - front and side doors.
3. Clean off walkway up to the front door at the library.

Secondary:

4. Church Street sidewalk
5. Main Street sidewalk from Library to Amherst Street
6. Middle Street sidewalk
7. Boston Post Road sidewalk northeast side of road.
8. Snow removal of the sidewalk through the park.