

# TOWN OF NEWTON

## *Winter Operations for Snow Removal and Ice Control Policy*

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GENERAL POLICY

It is the goal and intent of the Town of Newton, NH to provide timely, efficient and cost-effective winter maintenance, snow removal and ice control on the roadways of the municipality for the safety and benefit of the Town's residents and the general motoring public.

The said objective will be achieved by implementation and execution of the procedures and tasks outlined in the Town's Winter Operations Snow Removal and Ice Control Policy. Due to the many variables that are inherent in New England weather, each storm and/or weather event may require a slightly different effort and/or emphasis on any number of maintenance tasks, which together, determine the overall winter maintenance, snow removal or ice control strategy.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

It is not possible to maintain a black, snow and ice-free, road during a storm. It is the intention of the Town to provide a practical, safe access to homes, businesses and municipal facilities during winter storms.

It is our policy to start to conduct snow removal operations upon accumulations of two-inches of snowfall. The Road Agent may, at his or her discretion based upon weather information reports, elect to not remove snow until greater or lesser accumulations. Pre-treatment and ice control may be addressed prior to the actual storm beginning, during the actual storm as seen effective, and preceding the storm. It should be noted that salt has a much slower effect on melting snow and ice at temperatures below 25 degrees, and may not be applied until it is warmer.

Higher volume roads will be cleared before lower volume roads, which are before sidewalks and hydrants. Higher volume roads may be treated multiple times before a lower volume road is treated once, based upon assessment of risk, progression of the storm, etc. Sidewalk snow clearance and parking areas at all Town buildings will be conducted as possible during winter storms. Personnel availability and the need to maintain safe roadways will take priority.

EXECUTION

The Highway Department utilizes subcontractors for snow removal under the guidance of the Road Agent. Contractors are hired some time in the fall of each year and the contracted services are subject to continued appropriation of funds for this purpose during the fiscal year. The Selectmen and Road Agent reserve the right to control the response on an event by event basis in order to conserve resources. There may be circumstances where as a result of equipment breakdown or compliance with commercial driver regulations, some or all of the equipment may not be deployed or even able to be deployed. Other variables that could prevent implementation of the policy or availability of equipment; snow accumulation in excess of 1" per hour, freezing

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rain or other icing conditions, traffic congestion, emergencies or personnel illness. The contracts do not guarantee that the same level of effort can be maintained throughout the response to a winter event. The Road Agent is responsible for keeping in touch with the contractor to perform overall management of the contract.

#### MATERIALS

The Town uses approximately 300 tons of road salt and 450 cubic yards of sand each season. The sand is used as an abrasive and is applied to the road to improve the public's motor vehicles traction. Salt is employed by the Town as a de-icing and anti-icing agent and is used on the Town Roads at dangerous intersections and extreme road conditions as designated by the Selectmen and the Road Agent. *(Per 1973 Warrant Article XII)* The entire supply of sand is purchased each year from a supplier as needed. Unless weather conditions require a different approach, winter maintenance routes are treated with a mixture of sand and salt. The mixture is maintained at a minimum of one part salt to two parts sand. The mixture is applied to the center of the roadway where traffic can work the mix traveling either way. The mixture of sand/salt applied to the roads does not guarantee that roads will be safe for travel at posted speeds in all storm conditions. Vehicle operators remain responsible to adjust their driving habits to the conditions presented.

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 moisture brine. The sand/salt mixture is only effective to approximately 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Other deicing agents are effective to lower temperatures, but cost and need for specialized equipment have forestalled their use at this time.

Residents will have access to sand stored at the Transfer Station with a five gallon bucket limit. (Selectmen's Meeting, December 22, 2008)

In 2008, the Town of Newton built a sand and salt storage shed on town property located off Dugway Road. Due to this new storage shed, the Board of Selectmen decided to test two resident wells on abutting properties to the shed each year in order to analyze the sodium content. The town will use a laboratory accredited by the NH Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program and will conduct a Basic Water Test. Water samples will be taken as directed by the laboratory instructions by the property owner in view of a town employee/official. The two properties to be tested are 40 Amesbury Road and 2 Shirley Avenue and tests are to be conducted in October/November each year. (Selectmen's Meeting, December 22, 2008)

#### FLOW ROUTE PRIORITIES

1. 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

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one hour of the bus route time. Higher volume roads will be maintained before lower volume roads and is based upon assessment of risk and progression of the storm.

2. Public parking areas at Town buildings will be maintained as possible during business hours, with the main snow clearance effort to be done before opening for business.
3. Transfer Station/Recycling Area. 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 are to keep public areas as clear as possible to provide for safe access as 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.
4. Fire Hydrants and Sidewalks: Personnel from the Fire Department will maintain the removal of snow from all Fire Hydrants in Town. When there is no one from the Fire Department to remove the snow, the Road Agent will take over this responsibility. Presently, there are 16 Fire Hydrants in Town. Residents are encouraged to volunteer to keep hydrants and sidewalks clear in front of their property.

**ROADS NOT RECEIVING WINTER MAINTENANCE**

The Town of Newton does not maintain a number of roadways as part of its ongoing winter maintenance activities. The areas not maintained by the Town include:

- A. Town roads classified as Class VI roads
- B. Private roads
- C. Per Town Meeting vote on March 11, 2003 the Town voted to not continue plowing snow on the following private roads: Deluxe Avenue, Shirley Avenue, First Street, Ray Avenue, Edward Avenue, Wenmarks Road (past the beach) and Rights-of-Way in Marcoux Grove.
- D. School District sidewalks and parking areas, which are the responsibilities of the school district.

**SALT FREE AREAS**

- A. The entire length of Currierville Road and DesRoberts Road
- B. Gravel roads will not be treated with salt at any time. (This is to prevent the frozen gravel from melting)

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**DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY**

Occasionally mailboxes or other devices such as markers, stakes, vehicles and sports equipment are damaged by snow plowing operations due to poor visibility, being buried in a snow bank or the weight/volume of the snow being plowed. This damage is not deliberate and in most cases is unavoidable. These devices are located within the town limits and are the responsibility of the property owner. The Road Agent will work with the owner to locate the safest possible location and to offer advice to minimize potential damage. The town requires for all devices excluding mailboxes to be removed from the town limits before November 15<sup>th</sup> or the first snow fall. (Selectmen's Meeting, October 26, 2009)

**WIDENING OR PUSHING BACK SNOW BANKS**

Following storms with heavy snowfall or when several storms result in substantial snow bankings, the Town will undertake a roadway widening procedure, which will push back the snow banks. The Town uses a one wheeled loader to load snow for removal for line of sight distance at intersections. These are necessary operations because it accomplishes the following:

1. Provides room for future snow storage and to make room for emergency equipment.
2. Reduces or prevents melted snow from running out onto the roadway pavement and creating icing conditions.
3. Increases safe sight distance at intersections and driveways.
4. Maintains a uniform line by eliminating protrusions at driveways and intersections.

Unfortunately there is no way to prevent depositing snow in previously cleaned driveways or walkways except to leave a hazardous projecting mound of snow. With hundreds of driveways of all sizes and descriptions along our highway system it is impossible to clear these individual drives as the cost would be prohibitive and would probably result in complaints of Town funds expended for the benefit of certain individuals.

Per RSA 231:90 (I) Duty of Town After Notice of Insufficiency requires that any person may give written notice of such insufficiency to the Selectmen or Road Agent.

**Date Adopted: November 20, 2006**

*Chairman Nelson motioned to accept the Winter Operations for Snow Removal and Ice Control Policy as written as of November 20, 2006. Second by Selectman Ulcickas. Vote: Unanimous.*

*Chairman McCarthy motioned to accept the Winter Operations for Snow Removal and Ice Control Policy as amended per the recommendation of the Road Agent. Second by Selectman Thayer. Vote: Unanimous.*