

Stillwater County Snow Plowing Policies

Districts

Each equipment operator is assigned a certain area for snow plowing during the year. When need arises, operators will assist in other areas of the County, depending on snow conditions.

School Bus Routes

School bus routes are given first priority.

High-Use Roads

High volume roads are given second priority.

Other Roads

Paved roads that are not school bus routes are given third priority. Gravel roads which are not school bus routes are given fourth priority. Unimproved dirt roads will be plowed as time allows and upon request.

Snow Removal for State Hwy or other Jurisdiction on Contract services with providers or cooperative agreements with MDT, Cities, BLM, FWP, or other government agencies.

Operations

Equipment used for snow removal includes snowplows, motor graders, loaders, trucks, and chemical applicators.

Abrasive material used to improve traction once a snow or ice-floor (or frost) is established will be 3/8 minus graded material and sand. Rock salt or proprietary products may also be used.

Liquid Products: Salt brine, Magnesium Chloride, Calcium Chloride, may also be used for a variety of applications.

Applications include:

1. Anti-icing
2. Deicing
3. Treatment with abrasives

Snow fences are established in areas to prevent drifting of snow on roadways.

Procedures

Jurisdiction roads will be kept as passable and as safe as natural occurrences allow. Winter storms vary in duration and severity. Officials will use forethought, judgment and skill to match maintenance application to winter storms and allowable budget. As a storm moves in, a likely sequence might be:

1. Observe weather predictions.
2. Apply anti-icing chemicals.
3. Observe presence of snow and ice.
4. Plow to remove excessive snow.
5. Continue to plow and apply chemically treated abrasives in key areas such as intersections and approaches.
6. De-ice with chemicals in key areas using care not to use chemicals where drifting snow could cause refreezing.
7. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 as well as pray for sunshine.

General Policies

Normal snow plowing shall be conducted during daylight hours between 5:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., four days per week.

Upon the discretion of the Road & Bridge Superintendent, snow plowing roads shall occur during early morning hours and/or weekends.

The “Department” will not plow snow during high winds unless it is an emergency.

The “Department” will not be liable for any fence damage that occurs to fences which lie within the County’s right-of-way.

The “Department” will not be liable for any mail boxes knocked over or damaged due to snow being plowed. However, the “Department” will replace any mail boxes which are physically hit by the “Department’s” snow plows. Paved roadways will be plowed when there is a significant accumulation of snow.

Graveled roadways will be plowed when there is a significant accumulation of snow according to priority list.

The “Department” will sand subdivision approaches inside the County right-of-way during emergency situations only.

When necessary, paved roads will be sanded on regular basis at major intersections, hills, curves, etc.

Graveled roads will be sanded only in emergency situations, or at the discretion of the Road & Bridge Superintendent.

Training New Drivers

Become familiar with designated snow routes.

Become familiar with School Bus Routes.

Drive routes in summer or fall when roads are clear to become aware of hazards.

Keep driver consistent with route when possible.

Have a new driver ride with experienced operators.

Inform driver to get proper rest and nutrition. If driver is unable to perform safely he should not be used.

Reference: *Snow Plowing Policies from Montana LTAP (MSU Local Technical Assistance Program)*
The above information was derived from various county road departments’ snow plowing policies.