

TOWN OF ALTON
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
Standard Operating Guidelines for
Winter Maintenance Snow and Ice Removal

Governing Laws: RSA 41:11, RSA 47:17, RSA 2231:92-a and RSA 507-B-2b

Approved Date: January 23, 2024

Policy: It is the intent of the Town of Alton 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, businesses and the general motoring public.

Procedure: the objective stated above will be achieved by implementation and execution of the procedures and tasks outlined in the Town of Alton Winter Operations Snow removal and Ice Control Procedures. Due to the many variables that are inherent in New England weather, each storm and/or weather event may require slightly different efforts and or emphasis on any number of maintenance tasks, which together, determine the overall winter maintenance, snow removal or ice control.

Level of Services: It is difficult to maintain the snow/black ice on roads and sidewalks during a storm. It is the intention of the Town of Alton to provide practical, safe access to homes, businesses and municipal facilities during a winter storm within the confines of budget limitations.

It is the policy to start snow removal operations upon an accumulation of two inches of snow fall. The DPW Director, Assistant DPW Director and/or Highway Foreman/manager, may at his/her discretion, based upon weather information reports elect not to remove snow until there is a greater or lesser accumulation. Pre-treatment and ice control may be addressed prior to the actual snow beginning, during the actual storms as seen effective, and after the storm. [Note: salt has a much slower effect on melting snow and ice at temperatures below 25 degrees and may not be applied without additives until it is warmer.]

Command: Direction of all winter maintenance activities for the Town of Alton is vested the DPW Director / Assistant DPW Director and/or Highway Foreman/manager.

Execution: The policy outlined above is intended to serve as the normal operation procedures for the winter maintenance, snow removal and/or ice control for the Town of Alton.

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One or more of the following, which may delay or prevent the implementation of this policy, may affect any part of or all of this policy:

1. Equipment Breakdown
2. Snow Accumulation in excess of 1 inch per hour
3. Traffic congestion
4. Emergencies
5. Illness or Absences of Personnel
6. Budget constraints
7. Extensive operations w/ an exhausted crew

Adoption: This policy is effective as of **January 23, 2024**, and supersedes any policy issued. All residents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the content as it describes the condition that one might expect to encounter before, during and following a winter storm event.

WINTER OPERATIONS SNOW REMOVAL AND ICE CONTROL PROCEDURES

(Includes Paved, Gravel and Sidewalks, Solid Waste Facility and Parking Areas)

Equipment: The Public Works Department utilizes all the assets needed to address snow emergencies.

A list of the current rolling stock assets is included in the appendix. The Town owns (3) 36,200(GVW) vehicle weight (GVW) trucks, (3) 57,220(GVW) Trucks and (3) One Ton 19,500 (GVW) trucks, all which have mounted hydraulic powered sanders with wings and front plows. One Town pick-up Truck, backhoe, loader and pieces of specialty equipment complete the snow and ice fighting force.

Routes: Currently, the town is divided into nine plow routes and nine treatment routes. There are a total number of 192 road lane miles in the Town of Alton. Town maintained roads are comprised of 96 Center line road miles, which include 22 center line miles of graveled roads and 74 center miles of paved roads. Town roads not maintained in the winter include Class VI roads. State roads in town include 35 interstate road miles. In good weather conditions it will take 2.5-3 hours to *complete* a plow route depending on its location in town, relative proximity to the Town Highway Garage..

Manpower: The Town when full staffed needs 11 full time employees assigned to winter maintenance operations.

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Materials: The department uses approximately 1,250 tons of salt and 2,500 cubic yards of sand each season. The sand is used as an abrasive for gravel roads and applied to improve the public's motor vehicle traction. On paved roads, salt and treated salt, consisting of a liquid deicer, magnesium chloride and organic sugars, is lightly spread at approximately 400lbs. per mile to allow it to create liquid salt brine. The department employs salt as a de-icing agent. In the "low Salt Areas" designated in town, only sand is used and only when necessary and salt is applied only in extreme icing conditions. Unless weather conditions require a different approach, winter maintenance routes are routinely treated with sand/salt (paved roads) and sand (gravel roads). When salting paved roads, we typically treat @ approximately 400lbs per mile. Sand is spread at a higher ratio of 750 to 1,000lbs per mile when needed. When salt is applied it creates brine on the road surface that reduces snow compaction on the paved roads. Applying salt to gravel roads has a negative impact and can create mud. The road crown and the vehicular traffic further assist with the distribution of the brine. Salt becomes less effective as the temperature drops.

The Town uses sand during extreme cold temperatures (once it drops below 10 degrees Fahrenheit) on all roads. During extreme cold, the Town will only use sand and only where needed. Our Sand is mixed with salt in a ratio of 20/1 (20 parts sand to one part salt). This helps to prevent the sand from freezing in the spreaders of the trucks and in the sand stock pile. During extreme sub-zero temperatures even this mixture will freeze.

Our sand supply is bid out every 3 years. Following bid requirements and award, the sand is trucked in to our storage facilities throughout the winter season, as needed. Rock salt is purchased through a supplier, as needed, at state bid price, and is trucked in to our storage facilities throughout the winter season by the supplier. Our building storage facility is capable of storing approximately 500+ tons of salt.

Communications: The Highway Department rolling stock is equipped with two way radios capable of transmitting and receiving on frequency 156.135. Every employee is assigned a unit number. Any private contractors working for the town communicate with the highway dept. via a Town 2 way radio. Communication equipment used by the Police, Fire and Highway Dept. allow for communication between departments.

Schools: The Highway Department is NOT responsible for the clearing of snow or for winter maintenance or treatments of the district school's access roads and parking lots; this is done by private contract under the administration of the School District. However, on days when school is in session, our winter maintenance efforts on our town roads must be timed to coincide with bus routing and delivery.

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Schools, continued: During a winter snow event, the bus company calls the Highway Dept. and asks the DPW Director and/or Highway Foreman/manager (example Unit 2) for information on the road conditions. We relate information on conditions of our town roads and the bus company then relays that information to the superintendent of schools. The superintendent of schools then makes the decision whether to close school or to delay opening and for how long a delay. There are 3 Towns included in the local school district so information must come from all 3 Highway Departments as the conditions may vary from Town to Town.

Winter Parking Ban: The Town of Alton has an ordinance (Section 9-9.2.D.1a) that enacts a winter parking ban every year from November 15th to April 1st between the hours of 10PM and 6AM. This ban prohibits parking in or on any town road or in any town right of way during those times. Any vehicle so parked as to obstruct such snow plowing and or snow removal operations may be towed by the Town of Alton Highway Dept. at the expense of the vehicle owner, unless specified exempt by the Town of Alton Highway Dept. The purpose of this winter parking ban is to allow winter maintenance crews unobstructed snow removal and ice control routes as much as possible and to maintain the maximum effectiveness of their efforts. The penalty is a fine not to exceed \$25.00 (Twenty- Five Dollars) for each violation.

Placing of Snow: The placing of snow on the road surface of any public roads within the Town of Alton is prohibited. Pursuant to RSA 236:20, any person who shall place or cause to be placed, any snow or ice, upon the surface of any Class 4 or Class 5 highway or road way of the Town of Alton, shall be subject to a fine and reimbursement to the Town for any expense incurred in the cleanup of said violation.

Plow Routes Priorities: With a total of 94 miles of Town roads to remove snow and ice from and 9 pieces of equipment to handle this responsibility, the Highway Dept. needs to assign priorities for winter maintenance route activity in order to maximize the effectiveness of their efforts for the motoring public.

School bus routes are given the first priority during school days. Each plow route will ensure that the best possible snow clearance will be completed within 1/2 hour of bus route time. Second priority is given to the public parking areas: Town Offices, Town hall, Library, Police Station and Fire Stations will be maintained by plowing during winter storms. (The application of slip resistant materials will be applied after the storm as determined by the DPW Director and/or Highway Foreman/manager (example: Highway 1))

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Alton Roads Not Receiving Winter Maintenance: The Town of Alton does not maintain a number of roadways as part of its ongoing winter maintenance activities. The areas NOT maintained by the town include:

- Town roads classified as Class VI roads
- Private roads
- State maintained roads and number routes

Post Storm Operations: As determined by the Highway Foreman/manager the snow banks resulting from previous storm snow accumulations shall be pushed back, or shelved, using the plow and wings of dump trucks, grader or other suitable equipment to make space for snow removal from future storms. Priority will be given to pushing/shelving banks of snow at intersections for public safety prior to snow removal at the Alton Bay Parking areas. Snow removal from parking lots/area will be stored on adjacent Town properties or hauled to the Town's pit.

Damage to Private Property: It should be noted that the municipality is not held responsible for damages to any private property that is located within the town right of way (ROW). The ROW is often 25' wide from the center of the road, but most often property owners are confused and consider this their own property. In most cases, the ROW extends 10 to 20 feet on either side of the paved or gravel road. Homeowners cultivate extensions their lawns, place mailboxes, fences or stone walls with in this ROW area, which may improve the appearance of their property or the street, but it is obstructive to a good maintenance operation being conducted on the roadway.

Homeowners should not put bark mulch, crushed rock, stone walls, fences (visible and invisible) irrigations systems, trees, lawns or planting in the town right of way. The Town is not liable for any damage that may occur to property within its right of way. Many items interfere with heavy equipment and can

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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 owners risk within the right of way for the purpose of convenience. The United States Postal Bulletin 22102 states "The Postal Service suggests using a semi-arch or extended arm support which allows snow plows to sweep near or under mailboxes without damaging supports and provides easy access to the mailboxes by the carriers and the customers" Please refer to the Town of Alton complete Mailbox Replacement Policy attached:

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

- Mailboxes should, whenever possible, be installed at least 3 feet from the edge of the pavement or road edge.
- Installation should be sufficiently sturdy to withstand the weight of heavy snow resulting from coming off a plow and hitting the mailbox and post during winter maintenance plowing operations.

Sidewalk Snow Removal: Sidewalk snow plowing will be done at the end of the snow or ice storm, 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 street and roads will take priority. The Town of Alton has approximately 3 miles of sidewalks. During a large snow event it could take more than a day after the storm to open them up for pedestrians.

This Policy has been updated and approved by the Board of Selectmen on this 23th day of January 2024