

Operational Procedures

Snow removal in the Town of Ayer is a definite challenge that the Department of Public Works (DPW) is prepared to tackle every winter. Patience and understanding by all residents and the general public goes a long way in making snow removal in Ayer a successful undertaking.

Once plowing begins, it continues until well after the event is over. After the streets have been cleared and treated, all public buildings, schools and sidewalks (within a prescribed distance) are completed.

Snow removal operations are directed by the Highway Foreman. During weekends, holidays and night-time hours, the Police Department notifies the Highway Foreman of current roadway conditions at which time the Foreman commands the resources as needed.

Residents should keep in mind that the Town of Ayer DPW is responsible for over 50 miles of roadway. All DPW Divisions work during snow events. This includes the Highway, Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Divisions. In addition, we use three contractors to augment the crew during large storms. Personnel have predetermined plow routes which they are responsible for.



De-Icing Materials

In lieu of a sand-salt mix, the DPW uses rock salt mixed with an organic anti-icing product. This product is a byproduct of the brewing industry (mixed with calcium chloride) to form a liquid that coats the salt and lowers its operating temperature. This allows the salt to continue to work as an effective de-icer as the temperatures drop far below freezing.

Environment

Roadway maintenance treated salt mix can be applied at rates up to 30% less than dry material. This equates to greater than a 50% reduction in chloride ions introduced into the environment.

Street Entry Permits

Due to interference with snow-plowing operations, work within the roadway is not permitted between November 15th and April 1st.

Questions?

Questions or comments regarding snow removal operations and policies/procedures can be directed to:

Doug Jaspersen, Highway Division Foreman
or

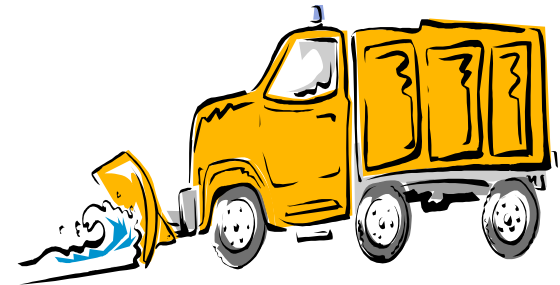
Dan Van Schalkwyk, Public Works Director
25 Brook Street
(978) 772-8240 Mon-Fri 7:30-3:30



TOWN OF AYER
Department of Public Works

2023-2024

A Residents Guide to Snow Removal Operations & Procedures



Purpose

The intent of this pamphlet is to advise all residents of the Town of Ayer Department of Public Works (DPW) winter snow removal objectives and to request the assistance of the residents in these procedures. The primary goal of the DPW is to ensure that all the maintained roadways are promptly cleared and treated as quickly and safely as possible following a storm event. The cooperation of all residents is essential for the DPW to achieve this objective. This brochure is simply a reminder that your assistance and patience is greatly appreciated as the DPW provides the winter maintenance required to clear and treat the roadways in an effort to make the roadways safe for vehicular traffic.

Plowing, shoveling or blowing snow into the traveled way causes dangerous traveling conditions. This also means more time and money is spent re-clearing the roadway surfaces.

Sidewalks

The DPW would like to remind residents to remove snow from sidewalks in accordance with the local Bylaws:

ARTICLE IX - POLICE REGULATIONS

SECTION 5. The tenant or owner of any estate abutting on any street, highway, or town way in the town, and where there now is, or hereafter may be, a sidewalk constructed of or covered with concrete, brick, cement, stone, wood, or any other material than earth, ashes, or gravel, shall within twelve hours after the ceasing to fall, form, or drift thereon, of any snow, sleet or ice, remove or cause to be removed such snow, sleet, or ice therefrom so far as it can be removed, and if the same cannot be wholly removed shall sprinkle, or cause to be sprinkled thereon, sand, ashes, sawdust, or other suitable substance, so that such sidewalk shall not be slippery and shall be safe and convenient for public travel.

Mailboxes

Mailboxes should be secured and set back from the roadside to prevent damage that can occur from the snow leaving the plow-blade. The majority of phone calls received by the DPW regarding damaged mailboxes could be avoided if this were done.

It is the responsibility of the residents, not the DPW, to remove snow from their mailboxes.

The DPW mailbox damage police can be found at <https://www.ayer.ma.us/streets-sidewalks/pages/snow-removal-guidelines>

Safety

The DPW personnel have many years of experience dealing with all types of winter weather conditions. If you are traveling the roadways during a winter storm event remember to be conscious of increased stopping distances, limited sight visibility, road debris, and other travelers (pedestrians and motor vehicles) including the plow operators.

Remember the DPW personnel are making the roadways safe for you and all others traveling within the Town of Ayer. Please keep a minimum distance of 400-feet from the plows and sanders to avoid damage to windshields and to prevent possible accidents. The plowing operations require the drivers to make frequent stops and turns. These maneuvers may require the vehicles to back-up along the traveled way. Patience, courtesy and forethought are critical in making winter driving safe for all.

Landscaping

Residents can help protect their landscaping by placing markers at the edge of lawns and curbs to aid the operators during the plowing procedures. The DPW is not responsible for damages to lawns and/or landscaping during plowing operations.

Driveways

Residents should remember to place the snow at the opposite end of their driveway from the direction of the snowplow. This will help keep the larger amounts of snow from being deposited back into the driveways during the plowing operations. It is the responsibility of the residents, not the DPW, to remove snow from their driveways.

How can you help?

Here are a few suggestions to help not only yourself, but the DPW as well:

1. Drive cautiously. Be aware of the road conditions and your surroundings.
2. Refrain from traveling during a storm event unless it is absolutely necessary.
3. Do not permit children to play in and around the edge of the road. Snow forts carved in the snow-banks are strongly discouraged.
4. Do not plow, shovel or blow snow into the roadway.
5. Prior to final clean-up of your driveway, check the road condition. If it does not appear to be completely clear or needs to be widened, chances are the plow may return and may push snow back into the entrance of your driveway. Waiting until the plows have finished making the roadways safe might keep you from clearing your driveway more than once.
6. Clean around any hydrants and catch basins. Doing so will help the Fire Department in case there is a need to locate and operate the hydrant. Exposing catch basin grates will help remove the runoff from the snow-melt and prevent ponding (and potential freezing) of water in the street.
7. Be Patient. All roads will be cleared as soon as possible.

Closings/Cancellations

Schools: The Regional School Department determines school closings and cancellations during extreme winter weather conditions, not the Department of Public Works.

Library: The Ayer Library is closed (or closes early) due to extreme weather conditions. Please call ahead at (978) 772-8250.

COA: When school is cancelled there is no *Meals on Wheels* delivery, no on-site lunch service, & no MART van service.