



CITY OF PORT COLBORNE

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Winter Control Service Standards

Classification of Roads

The City of Port Colborne maintains all roads based on a priority system. Roads are classified into Primary Roads, Secondary Roads, and Laneways. The more traffic there is on a road, the higher the priority.

The City's main objective during a storm is to keep the Primary Roads clear for emergency services and to maintain safe, passable school bus routes. Only after these roads are deemed to be clear, are plowing and sanding operations commenced on Secondary Roads. Laneways and Municipal Parking Lots are cleared when Primary and Secondary Roads are completed.

It is the goal of the Operations Division to plow all Primary and Secondary Roads in less than twenty-four (24) hours from the end of a snowfall.

What is a Primary Road?

For the purposes of winter control, a Primary Road is an arterial road upon which a higher volume of traffic travels on and provides access to most residential secondary roads, such as Clarence Street and King Street.

What is a Secondary Road?

A Secondary Road is any other road not designated as a Primary Road and not a Laneway. These roads carry a low volume of traffic in both urban and rural areas of the City. Examples of Secondary Roads are Linwood Avenue and Berkley Avenue.

What is a Laneway?

A Laneway is a designated Municipal rear access laneway, such as Tugboat Lane or Schooner Lane.

Primary Roads

Goal Conditions - Center Bare Pavement

Surfaces will be maintained to a center bare condition (center six to eight feet) where possible through the effective use of all staff, equipment and materials suited to the conditions.

The maximum allowable snow accumulation is approximately 7.5 cm.

As long as conditions persist, Primary Roads will be plowed every four (4) hours, based on average snowfalls.

Secondary Roads

Goal Conditions - Snow Packed Surface

The maximum allowable fresh snow accumulation is 15 cm.

As long as conditions persist, Secondary Roads will be plowed every six (6) hours, based on average snowfalls.

Surfaces shall be maintained in a snow packed conditions.

Guidelines

Complete sanding of all streets and roads shall be carried out only to address extremely slippery conditions, freezing rain or general icy conditions not controllable by other means.

Operations will respond to requests from the Niagara Regional Police Services to sand or salt road sections which they have identified as a hazard.

Predetermined routes for sanding shall be followed except in critical situations.

During continuing storms, priority for service will continue to be based on higher class of road receiving service before any lower class of road or laneway.

It is acknowledged that in the event of mechanical breakdowns, accidents or other operational problems, objectives set forth may not be met.

Frigid facts.....

Municipal Roadways

The City of Port Colborne has 279 km of roadway (110 km urban, 169 km rural) or 520 lane km.

For the purposes of snow plowing, the municipality is divided into eight (8) plowing routes with a snow clearing vehicle assigned to each route. Total lane km in each route varies from 33 km to 97 km.

Plow Routes

Each route takes approximately six to eight hours to complete, depending on weather, traffic, available staff & equipment and number of vehicles parked on the street. Each route must have the primary roads within that route plowed first before the secondary roads are begun. If another storm occurs prior to completion of secondary roads, attention will again shift back to the primary roads.

Frequently asked questions.....

What happens when snow is forecast?

The Operations Yard receives daily weather reports and monitors changing weather conditions. Municipal roads are patrolled seven days a week. Our crews are ready to clear your roads as quickly and effectively as possible. At the discretion of the Public Works Supervisor, sand/salt mixture may be applied at the start of a storm.

How can I help during a snow storm?

Our snow plow crews can gain more ground when there are less vehicles on the road. You can help by staying off the streets until conditions improve and by keeping vehicles parked in your driveway. Blowing or shoveling snow onto roadways is an offence under the Highway Traffic Act, and the City's Snow Removal By-law, keeping it on the boulevard or your property makes for safer driving and keeps streets as passable as possible.

For safety reasons, please avoid passing sanders, graders and plows while in operation and leave at least three car lengths between your vehicle and the equipment.

How long does it take to plow the streets?

Each route generally takes between six to eight hours to complete based on all staff and equipment being available, weather conditions and traffic. Our goal for completion is less than twenty-four hours from the end of a typical snowfall. If your street is a secondary road and is not plowed after a snowfall with accumulation of 15 cm or more, please wait until the allotted twenty-four hours have passed after the end of the snow fall to call in. Your patience is appreciated.

I have to get to work and my street isn't plowed yet. What should I do?

Most snow storms are forecasted ahead of time so allow yourself plenty of time to get there. Heavier snow falls take us more time so be patient, we'll get there.

The plow has been down my street but there are still areas of snow build-up. Why can't they do a better job?

Most areas of snow build-up left behind are areas where cars were parked and the plow had to go around or residents put snow back on the road. Streets could be plowed wider and left tidier if cars were parked off street or in driveways. Residents are reminded that depositing snow on municipal roadways is an offence under the Highway Traffic Act and the City's Snow Removal By-law and could be subject to a fine.

Why does the snow plow push the snow back into my driveway?

For a resident this can be quite annoying, but unfortunately it cannot be helped. The snow must be moved from the travelled portion of the road. Our snow plow crews are directed to push the snow back as far as possible, as chances are, there's more snow coming this winter and the room is needed for those future snowfalls. When the City receives a heavy snowfall, if possible, do not shovel your driveway until after the plow has gone by. If you must shovel do not throw the snow out onto the roadway as you may create a hazard for another vehicle, and if an accident were to occur you might be held liable. Remember, when shoveling your driveway, always pile the snow on the left side of the driveway (when facing the property). This will give you a better line of vision as you are exiting your drive and the plows will not drag your shoveled snow back across your driveway entrance.

I only have on-street parking. Why does the City plow snow against my car?

The City must remove the snow from the travelled portion of the road. On a two-way street where there is only parking on one side, the plow operator cannot push the snow away from the parked car into oncoming traffic, as it would create a hazard and liability. Snow is always pushed away from oncoming traffic. When heavy snowfalls are predicted, residents are advised not to park on the roads. This is done to reduce the chance of plowing in parked vehicles, eliminating the chance of damaging vehicles and allowing for a more efficient plowing operation. Parking and Traffic By-law 89-2000, Section 205.01.02 states that no person shall park a vehicle or permit a vehicle to remain parked on any highway in such a manner as to interfere with the clearing of snow from the highway. This is a \$75. penalty.

Am I required to clear my sidewalk?

The City Snow Removal By-law provides for the removal and clearance of all snow and ice from sidewalks abutting the highway in front of, or alongside, or at the rear of any occupied or unoccupied lot or vacant lot. The by-law requires property owners to remove all snow and ice from these sidewalks within 24 hours of the end of a snow or ice event.

Who can I call to report a vehicle on the road or individuals throwing snow onto the road?

Please call the By-law Enforcement Division at 905-835-2900 ext. 229. Please provide the address of the complaint area and an officer will investigate.

Who can I call for information?

During snow storms or after heavy snowfalls, residents may call the Operations Yard @ 905-835-5079. The duty foreman can be reached at that phone number as well. Current winter control activities are posted on our website.