

City of Greensburg

416 SOUTH MAIN STREET
GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 15601

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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January 4, 2008

SNOWFIGHTING PROCEDURES

The City of Greensburg Department of Public Works, also known as the Street Department, operate under the following guidelines and procedures when snowfighting during the winter.

INITIAL RESPONSE

The first objective during a snow event of any magnitude is to get Rock Salt applied to the streets to begin the snow melt and to keep the snow from adhering to the road surface. Most times this is all that is required. Rock Salt can melt as much as 2 inches of snow, depending on conditions. Even with a snow event that is forecast with multiple inches, salt remains the first step of our operation.

ROCK SALT PERFORMANCE

There are several factors, or conditions, that contribute to how well the Rock Salt will perform after it has been applied to the streets during any snow event. They are;

- a) *Air Temperature* – Rock Salt loses effectiveness as the temperature falls below 20-degrees (F). Some municipalities add chemicals, such as Calcium Chloride or Magnesium Chloride, to enhance the effectiveness of salt at lower temperatures. At the present time we do not have such capabilities.

- b) *Traffic Flow* – The amount of traffic passing over a street, once the Rock Salt has been applied, helps to agitate the salt with the snow creating Brine. It is the liquid Brine that breaks down the snow causing it to melt.

- c) *Light of Day* – The light of the day influences the effectiveness of salt once it has been applied to the streets. As nightfall arrives, temperatures fall, traffic is reduced, and the efficiency of salt is greatly reduced.

- d) *Snow Routes* – The number of employees who are available, particularly after hours, to operate the salt trucks on the snow routes influence how quickly the streets throughout the city are covered. Operations can consist of as few as four snow routes, or as many as seven.

- e) *Persistent Snow* – When a snow storm is persistent, and snow is accumulating rapidly, salt will be applied during the first part of the operation. At the point when snow plowing is required, salt will not be put down again until the end of the storm is near. This is done primarily to conserve material, and to avoid from having the snowplow continually plow the salt off to the side of the roadways, as it will become necessary for the routes to be plowed several times.

SNOW PLOWING OPERATIONS

Plowing begins when more than three inches of snow has accumulated and is continuing, or is predicted to continue, or drifting has occurred.

When it has been decided to begin snow plowing the goal is to make the network of streets passable so that Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) can access them, and not necessarily to clear each street to bare pavement.

After the snow has stopped accumulating, and all streets are opened, crews will double back on the routes to widen areas so that all streets are plowed back curb-to-curb.

Higher priority is given to the network of over 50 miles of city streets. *Alley ways and cul-de-sacs are considered lower in priority, and therefore will be plowed accordingly.*

When a snow event occurs, and multiple inches are forecast, every available vehicle in the Street Department fleet will be used for plowing. This would include the seven salt trucks and one additional vehicle, or a total of eight snowplow vehicles capable of snowplowing. The salt trucks would plow their assigned routes, and the extra truck would be used to begin plowing the alleys, and widening cul-de-sacs.

SNOW REMOVAL

After a storm has produced a significant amount of snow, certain locations within the city require additional services after snow-plowing operations cease. Snow removal or the loading of snow and trucking it to a dumpsite, will then begin.

Within the fleet of equipment, the City has two backhoes, a skid-steer loader, and a snow blower that can be employed for loading snow onto our dump trucks.

Priority for removing snow begins in the Business District. All the streets having metered parking would be considered first. Then, each of the off-street surface parking lots will be cleared of snow.

Snow removal on residential streets begins first with the older neighborhoods that have narrow streets and homes without driveways.

Once it has been determined that snow removal has become necessary, this function normally occurs simultaneously in the neighborhoods and Business District.

TIPS FOR THE HOMEOWNER / TENANT

- Leave the last two feet of your driveway unshoveled until the city has completed curb-to-curb plowing. This will prevent our plows from plowing this area back in.
- If you must shovel the very end of your driveway prior to our completion, place the snow in a pile to the right of your driveway, (with your back facing the house). If placed in this area it will lessen the amount of snow plowed back onto the driveway. ***Understand that***

plowing operations for the roadway cannot prevent the redeposit of snow into the driveway area.

- Homeowners and building tenants are discouraged from throwing, or placing snow and ice onto city streets.
- Cul-de-sacs are the most difficult areas to plow. The snow plow operators will place the snow in the most practicable location within the cul-de-sacs.
- Objects in the streets are our biggest deterrent to efficient plowing operations. Place garbage cans on the property and *NOT* on the street. Do not place lawn chairs or furniture on the roadway for any reason.
- Where applicable, park vehicles off-street. This allows the snow plow operator to efficiently clear the snow back to the curb, providing for a clear, full width roadway.

MISSION

Clearing the streets of snow and ice is a difficult process that often involves long hours and much effort. The primary objectives of the Greensburg Street Department are to safely, and efficiently, make all public roadways passable in a timely manner.