

Orginator: City Manager's Office

Revision Date: December 1, 2007

Amended Date: February 19, 2009

Subject: Snow Maintenance and Removal Policy

CROSS REFERENCE: Ordinance No. 464, Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places. Ordinance No. 944, Property Maintenance Code, Section PM303.3 Sidewalks and Driveways.

Purpose: The City of Escanaba assumes basic responsibility for the control of snow and ice on City streets. Reasonable snow and ice control is necessary for routine travel and emergency services. The City will provide such control in a safe and cost effective manner, keeping in mind safety, budget, personnel and environmental concerns. The City will utilize City employees and City equipment for street snow removal. On a "typical" Monday thru Friday snow event, the City deploys 3 Graders, 4 Dump Trucks, 2 Loaders, 3 Pick-up Trucks with plows, 2 Salt Trucks and 1 Trackless Snow Blower for snow and ice removal.

I. COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Snow plowing and/or ice control operations shall commence under the direction of the Director, Public Works. In the absence of the Director, Public Works, snow plowing and/or ice control operations shall commence under the direction of the Director, Public Works designee. The City must remain flexible in the face of varying weather, temperatures, and lengths of storms.

In general, operations shall commence as follows:

A. *Weekend snow plow operations will focus on major streets as designated on the major street salt/plow map and reported trouble spots. The response may include; (3) graders, (1) loader and (1) salt truck. The mechanic will be called out only if needed. Parking lots at City Hall, Civic Center, Public Safety will be plowed during the weekend operation.*

- B. Snow accumulation with continual snow fall, warrants commencement of plowing operations. When City crews plow snow, the plowing cannot remove all the snow covering, leaving behind a light covering of snow. That remaining snow covering is treated with de-icing material, normally laid down concurrently with plowing operations.
- C. Drifting of snow may warrant commencement of partial or full operations depending upon conditions.
- D. De-icing of pavements may warrant partial or full operation depending upon extent and conditions. To avoid wasting de-icing material, de-icing of streets is cut back on or curtailed in extremely low temperatures, as de-icing material is ineffective at temperatures below ten degrees. High winds, especially in lower temperature ranges, cause de-icing to be ineffective.
- E. *Outside of scheduled work hours, de-icing operations shall only include major streets as designated on the major street salt/plow map and reported trouble spots. In response to snow plowing or snow hauling activities, the salt truck may remain part of the response, if needed. The route map is posted at the Department of Public Works and attached to this policy.***

Plowing and/or de-icing operations may occur during the assigned work shift or on a specific situation call out. If the specific situation is on a Main Thoroughfare, the response shall be as soon as possible if workers and equipment are available. Once a work shift has ended, the Director, Public Works or his designee has the discretion of responding immediately to other specific situations or waiting until a new work shift begins.

For emergency vehicles responding to emergency situations (fire, medical, police) within the City, necessary workers and equipment will be dispatched as soon as possible, at the request of the supervising officer of the emergency situation.

II. WINTER PARKING REGULATIONS

In order to better the flow of traffic, to ease the parking situations and expedite the movement of fire equipment and emergency vehicles during the months of December, January, February and March, it is hereby ordered that parking will be restricted to one side of every street and avenue within the confines of the City from 7:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. during the months of December, January, February and March, in the City of Escanaba in accordance with the schedule listed below:

- A. Parking will be allowed only on the west side of all streets.
- B. Parking will be allowed only on the north side of all avenues.
- C. No vehicle shall be parked for a period longer than one half hour on any street or avenue within the confines of the City between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- D. On Ludington Street and the 100 blocks off of Ludington Street, parking will be allowed on both sides of the street with the exception of South 15th Street, South 17th Street, South 18th Street, South 19th Street and South 22nd Street.
- E. The issuance of a traffic ticket or notice of violation by a public safety officer in the City shall be deemed an allegation of a parking violation as per the City Ordinance.

III. SNOW PLOW ROUTES

The City has classified City streets based on the street function, traffic volume, and importance to the welfare of the community. The first priority streets are "Main Thoroughfares" which are high volume streets which connect major sections of the City and provide access for emergency fire, police, schools and medical services. The following streets are designated Main Thoroughfares:

1. Ludington Street
2. Stephenson Avenue
3. Washington Avenue
4. Sheridan Road
5. South/North 14th Street
6. South/North 10th Street
7. 1st Avenue North – 4th to 10th Street
8. 3rd Avenue North
9. North 30th Street
10. Danforth Road
11. Lake Shore Drive
12. Willow Creek Road
13. 5th Avenue South
14. 6th Avenue North
15. 14th Avenue South From L.S.D. to S.L.R.

The second priority is local thoroughfares providing access to commercial businesses and residences. The third priority of plowing are alleys.

IV. MINIMUM LEVELS OF SERVICE

The following are minimum levels of service that can be expected. However, the City will strive to achieve better results, if possible.

- A. Snow removal operations shall begin when snow accumulation occurs on designated Main Thoroughfares, and shall continue periodically throughout the duration of the snow event. It is the intention of the City to keep Main Thoroughfares open to traffic, if possible, during a storm; however, it is not the intent to keep them snow or ice free.
- B. All streets shall be open to traffic (two lanes) as reasonably practical and feasible after the snow storm subsides.
- C. Ludington Street shall generally be plowed in the same manner as all other Main Thoroughfares. The Director, Public Works or his/her designee may elect to plow downtown streets during evening or early morning hours to avoid traffic and parked vehicle congestion. City owned parking lots are generally plowed at the same time as downtown streets. Snow may be piled for removal when snow is hauled from downtown.
- D. Ludington Street snow hauling, if necessary, shall begin after all streets have been plowed. Generally, snow hauling shall begin within 24 hours after a snowstorm subsides and completed within 72 hours (weekend snow hauling will only occur in emergency situations due to budgetary restraints).
- E. Alley plowing is done as part of the regular plowing operations of the City of Escanaba. Every attempt will be made to open all alleys as soon as possible for public use. Staffing and budgetary constraints may delay opening of an alley. Generally, all alleys will be plowed within 48 hours of a snow event, not including weekends. Smaller snow events may not require plowing of alleys, based on the decision of the Director of Public Works or his/her designee.

Should a subsequent storm occur within the minimum times for service, then such subsequent storm shall become the storm referred to in this policy.

V. SNOW EMERGENCIES

The Mayor may declare a snow emergency. In the event that a snow emergency is issued, parking is prohibited on any public street or alley until and after that particular street or alley has been plowed and the snow removed to the curb line.

Any vehicle parked in violation of this section may be ordered removed from any public street or alley by and at the discretion of the Director, Public Works or any Public Safety Officer. Such vehicle shall be towed to a designated place of safe keeping. The owner of such vehicle shall be responsible for the payment of all costs of such towing and storage in addition to penalties for any other violation of City Code.

It shall be a general rule that the towing of vehicles shall be the last option used. Whenever feasible, Public Safety Officer should make an attempt to contact a vehicle owner to request that the vehicle be moved prior to ordering the vehicle towed. However, for repeat violators or because of extraordinary snowfall amounts, large numbers of improperly parked vehicles, or other circumstances, it may not be feasible for the Public Safety Officer to attempt to contact a vehicle owner.

VI. METHOD OF PLOWING SNOW

Snow will be plowed in a manner so as to minimize traffic obstructions.

On Ludington Street and in areas where space does not allow for snow to be piled outside the driving lanes, snow will be plowed from the curb to the center of the street and then removed by hauling. Timing of such hauling shall be at the discretion of the Director, Public Works or his designee.

It is the Departmental goal to have the entire street system opened after a "typical" snowfall within twenty-four hours, **when the snow event occurs Monday thru Friday. This also assumes** a general plowing operation beginning at 2:30 A.M. and snowfall ending by 12:00 P.M. Depending on snowfall conditions and duration of the storm, cleanup operations can widely fluctuate.

VII. USE OF DE-ICING MATERIALS

The City is concerned about the effect of sand and salt on the environment and will limit its use for that reason. The City cannot be responsible for damage to grass caused by the sand/salt mixture and therefore will not make repairs or compensate residents for salt damage to turf areas in the street right-of-way. To avoid wasting salt, salting of streets is cut back on or curtailed in extremely low temperatures, as salt is

ineffective below ten degrees. High winds can, especially in lower temperature ranges, cause salt to be ineffective and/or cause drifting, requiring plowing. Potentially, either may reduce or postpone de-icing to avoid wasting material.

VIII. SUSPENSION OF OPERATIONS

Generally, operations shall continue until all streets are passable. Widening and clean up operations may continue immediately or on the following working day depending upon conditions and circumstances. Safety of the plow operators and the public is important. Therefore, snow plowing/removal operations will be terminated after 14 hours to allow personnel adequate time for rest. Operations may also be suspended during periods of limited visibility. Any decision to suspend operations shall be made by the Director, Public Works and shall be based on the conditions of the storm. The City will still provide access for emergency fire, police and medical services during a major snow or ice storm.

IX. EQUIPMENT

The City shall acquire, maintain, repair and replace equipment on a timely basis as the City's established budget shall allow. To provide for utilization of equipment in a cost effective manner, the City may use regular City trucks, motor graders, front-end loaders and any other regular equipment as may be useful for control of snow and ice.

Whenever existing snow removal heavy equipment is broken down for an excess of eight hours during a snow event, the Director, Public Works may rent equipment. The City Manager shall be notified of this decision immediately. A written report to include equipment down, reason for renting, estimated rental period, rental company, rental machine identification, rental rate, and estimate of total cost shall be submitted within 48 hours.

When the Director, Public Works determines that the policy levels of service cannot be provided by City forces, he/she shall report to the City Manager the following information:

- A. Additional time required to provide desired levels of service using just City forces.
- B. Additional equipment and/or personnel support required to achieve desired levels of service.
- C. Estimated number of hours equipment and/or personnel will be required.

- D. Private contractor service assessment (if needed).
- E. Determine availability of contractor equipment.
- F. Estimate cost of contracted service required.
- G. Determine availability of funds to meet estimated costs.

If contracted service or equipment is secured, the City Manager shall provide the City Council with a report containing the following information:

- A. Based on information supplied, the City Manager shall determine whether to contract for additional service or equipment, or accept reduced levels of service.
- B. Purpose of contracting snow removal.
- C. Estimated time and cost of contracted services.
- D. Time and date contract began.

In the absence of the City Manager, the Director, Public Works shall have full authority under this section and shall communicate any decisions or actions to the City Council.

X. PROPERTY DAMAGE

Snow plowing and ice control operations can cause property damage even under the best of circumstances and care on the part of the operators. The major types of damage are to improvements in the City right-of-way. The intent of the right-of-way is to provide room for snow storage, utilities, sidewalks and other City uses. However, certain private improvements such as mailboxes are required within this area. Therefore, the City will cooperate with the property owner to determine if the damage is the responsibility of the City and when it shall be the responsibility of the resident. The City accepts responsibility for mailboxes which are allowed to be placed in the road right-of-way, if the damage is by physically being struck by a plow blade, wing, or other piece of equipment. Mailboxes should be constructed sturdily enough to withstand snow rolling off a plow or a wing. Therefore, damage resulting from snow is the responsibility of the resident. The City will repair or replace mailboxes in those instances where the City is responsible for the damage. Damage to fences, trees or other structures will be repaired or replaced by the City if they are on private property. Lawns that are scraped or gouged by City equipment will be repaired by top dressing and seeding the following Spring. Residents are requested to assist by watering the areas that are repaired.

In instances where there is disagreement as to the source of the damage and the responsibility therefore, the Department of Public Safety shall determine the responsibility.

XI. DRIVEWAYS

One of the most frequent and most irritable problems in removal of snow from public streets is the snow deposited in driveways during plowing operations. Snow being accumulated on the plow blade has no place to go but in the driveway. Based on priorities and staffing level, City personnel do not provide driveway cleaning. Possible exceptions are at the discretion of the Director, Public Works for emergency situations.

By local Ordinance, residents are prohibited from plowing snow, ice or slush onto roadways. In addition, snow must not be piled in such a way as to obstruct motorists' vision. As plows operate to the right, you should pile snow to the right of your driveway as you face the road, keeping road boulevards and a travel portion clear and permitting access to mail boxes.

XII. SIDEWALKS

The City will maintain some of the sidewalks in the City. As there are a limited number of personnel available, the City will only maintain these sidewalks as personnel and equipment becomes available. A list of those sidewalks maintained by the City follows:

- A. All sidewalks adjacent to City-owned property.
- B. Bike Path.
- C. Sidewalks adjacent to public parking lots.
- D. Ludington Street.

Sidewalks will not be cleared on night shifts; this job will be done from 7:30 – 4:00, Monday thru Friday. Administration may call out the sidewalk person for a major snow event. Blowing and drifting snow may also warrant the use of the sidewalk plow being called out outside of normal hours of operation.

XIII. PLOWING OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

Unless there is direct benefit to City operations or unless emergency vehicles need access, there shall be no plowing of private property with City equipment.

XIV. MAIL DELIVERY

The snow plow operators make every effort to remove snow as close to the curblin as practical and to provide access to mailboxes for the Postal Department. However, it is not possible to provide perfect conditions and minimize damage to mailboxes with the size and type of equipment the City operates. Therefore, the final cleaning adjacent to mailboxes is the responsibility of each resident.

XV. COMPLAINTS

Complaints regarding snow and ice control or damage shall be taken during normal working hours and handled in accordance with the City's complaint procedures. Complaints involving access to property or problems requiring immediate attention shall be handled on a priority basis. Response time should not exceed thirty-six (36) hours for any complaint. It should be understood that complaint responses are to ensure that the provisions of this policy have been fulfilled and that all residents of the City have been treated uniformly. It is the City's intention to log all complaints and upgrade this policy as necessary in consideration of the constraints of our resources.

XVI. CITIZEN COOPERATION

In order to achieve the best possible results from the Public Works Department's snow and ice removal operations in the most efficient manner, all citizens of Escanaba are requested to cooperate fully with the Department. During snow emergencies and winter storm conditions, all residents are asked to remove their parked vehicles and trailers from all City streets if instructed by an Officer of the Department of Public Safety or an employee of the Department of Public Works. This will allow snow plows an opportunity to clear the streets quicker and with the fewer passes, improve accessibility and minimize risk of damage to private vehicles, saving both time and money.

The City will not be responsible for vehicles parked on the street or in a public parking lot that are isolated by snow piles due to plowing operations. Garbage and recycling carts that are set out for collection should be placed at the designated-garbage/recycle collection point, in the alley right-of-way or in a residential driveway during a snow event, not on the snow banks.

Snow removed from properties should not be stacked or stockpiled at sidewalk intersections and ramps. Travelers are asked to consider using alternate modes of transportation whenever possible during snow and ice events.

Snow removed from Ludington Street properties (sidewalks) should not be stacked or stockpiled but pushed into the street immediately after the snow event.

Citizens are asked to comply with the following Ordinance requirements as it pertains to placing snow or ice on a street or sidewalk:

- A. No person shall shovel or push by means of a plow or otherwise cause to be placed or deposited in or upon the traveled portion of any street or sidewalk or within any ditch or gutter in any public street within the City, any snow or ice removed by him, or under his direction, from any private property or from any public property abutting any private property owned or occupied by him except as herein provided. The existence of any deposit of snow or ice deposited by artificial means in or upon the traveled portion of any street or sidewalk, or within any ditch or gutter, in any public street shall be prima facie evidence that the occupant of the abutting property closest thereto placed or deposited said ice or snow therein.
- B. Any person may deposit snow or ice from such property and pile same in a public street, but only along, parallel with, and as a part of the bank of snow formed by the City in its snow plowing operations. Such snow or ice shall be piled on the bank immediately in front of and adjacent to the property so owned or occupied and in no event shall the snow or ice so placed extend more than two (2) feet further into the roadway than the existing bank.
- C. No such person shall take or remove, or cause to be removed, any snow, ice or other material from any public walk or from the banks of snow formed by the City in its plowing operation and pile or dump same within the street right-of-way in such manner as to reduce the width between the banks of snow formed by the City in its plowing operations by more than two (2) feet or to a height exceeding five (5) feet.
- D. Snow, ice or other material moved, piled or dumped in violation of this section may be removed by the City and the expense of such removal charged to the party found in violation of the Ordinance.

XVII. DEPARTURE FROM POLICY

The City acknowledges the policies set forth in this program are of a general nature and recognizes conditions may be so unusual or

unexpected that a departure from this general program may need to be authorized. The City Manager and/or Public Works Director may order a departure from these general policies when conditions are such that it's necessary for the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Escanaba. The City Manager or his/her designee is authorized to publicly announce that non-emergency travel is not recommended when conditions warrant such a warning.

This policy does not, nor is it intended, to encompass all details of the City of Escanaba snow, de-icing and control operations. The City of Escanaba encourages you to drive defensively. Even with the best service, driving conditions may still be hazardous in the winter months.