

TOWN OF SANDWICH HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT



Winter Maintenance Policy

Effective: November 23, 2015

I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to RSA 231:92-a, the Sandwich Board of Selectmen hereby establish the following Winter Maintenance Policy, which outlines the Town of Sandwich (Town)'s policy and procedures for winter and inclement weather road maintenance.

As the Highway Department prepares for winter, we would like to remind the residents of Sandwich and the general motoring public the Town's Winter Maintenance Policy. The Highway Department uses this policy to establish guidelines regarding the treatment of roads, and the Highway Department's response to winter weather events.

We ask that residents and guests be patient during winter weather events as there is a pre-determined priority to the maintenance and treatment of roads. Please remember that not everyone can be first on the list. Plow routes are set up to maximize the effective, efficient, and safe use of the equipment avoiding unnecessary use of equipment. We also want to ensure the safety of our residents, guests, and emergency vehicles. The Highway Department maintains sixty (60) miles of town roads. At present, there are four (4) plow routes and one (1) route for parking lots and sidewalks.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance regarding the activities and responsibilities for those who deal with winter's inclement weather conditions in and for the Town. It is the intent of this policy to state the Board of Selectmen's commitment to provide appropriate responses to winter inclement weather conditions – ice, snow, and other inclemency's – within the limitations of the Town's means and abilities to meet this goal. The Board of Selectmen and the Highway Department recognize the importance of a logical, organized, and structured approach to maintaining the Town's roads, access to buildings, sidewalks, Town Beach (Squam Lake only) and outdoor skating rink in a passable, usable and safe condition.

To implement this policy, the Board of Selectmen and the Road Agent established the priorities set forth in Section V; however, inclement weather can be unpredictable and variable. Therefore, the Board of Selectmen authorize the use of maximum discretion by the appropriate Town officials or employees to modify the stated priorities as conditions warrant or require.

III. GOAL

The Highway Department's goal is to have every town road plowed, sanded or otherwise treated and returned to a safe and passable condition within twelve (12) hours following the end of a storm event. Thereafter, the Highway Department is committed to maintaining that condition on all maintained roads within the reasonable and necessary constraints of safe operation, and the availability of resources.

IV. EXECUTION

This policy, including the standard operating procedures set forth below, will serve as the normal operation procedures for winter maintenance, snow removal, and/or ice control for the

Town of Sandwich. One or more of the following events or circumstances may affect all or any part of this policy by delaying or preventing its implementation:

- Equipment breakdown
- Snow accumulation in excess of one inch per hour
- Traffic congestion
- Emergencies
- Illness or absence of personnel
- Extensive operations requiring long hours of continuous service

V. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. LEVEL OF SERVICE: It is the Town's policy to start snow removal operations upon accumulation of three (3) inches of snow. The Road Agent, or his/her designee, may, at his/her discretion based on the weather reports elect not to remove snow until there is a greater or lesser accumulation.

During a storm event, it is not practical or reasonable to try to maintain a snow- and ice-free road or sidewalk; therefore, the objective is to provide practical and safe road travel during a storm event within the confines of budget limitations. Due to the many variables inherent to New England weather, each storm or weather event may require slightly different efforts and/or emphasis on any number of maintenance tasks, which when combined, will determine the overall winter maintenance, snow removal and ice control strategy.

B. PLOWING PRIORITY: As the Highway Department deploys its personnel and equipment, the roads will be maintained in a predetermined priority regardless of the type of weather event. With approximately 60 miles of Town roads from which to remove snow and ice and limited equipment to handle those responsibilities, the Highway Department assigns priorities for our plowing routes in order to maximize the effectiveness of their efforts. At present, there are four (4) plow routes and one (1) route for parking lots and sidewalks.

1. School bus routes have first priority during school days. Each plow route will ensure that the best possible snow clearance and treatment, if required, will be completed within one half hour of bus route time.
2. High traffic routes
3. Public parking area at Town Hall, Library, Fire Stations, Park and Recreation parking area, Police Station, and sidewalks. Sidewalks will be cleared and treated, if required, prior to the start and end of the school day.

C. EQUIPMENT AND MANPOWER: The Highway Department utilizes all assets needed to address snow and ice emergencies. The assets may vary from year-to-year based on changes in equipment inventory.

- Two (2) 35,000 gross vehicle weight trucks with plows and sanders
- One (1) 26,000 gross vehicle weight all-wheel drive truck with plow and sander
- One (1) 19,500 gross vehicle weight truck with plow and sander
- One (1) pickup truck with plow
- One (1) grader with plow and wing
- One (1) loader with plow and wing

In addition to Highway Department personnel, private contractors under contractual agreement with the Town of Sandwich will be used to plow some of the Town roads and parking lots on an as needed basis.

D. SANDING MATERIALS: The Highway Department uses approximately 60 tons of salt and 1,500 yards of sand each season. Just enough salt is mixed with the sand to prevent it from freezing.

E. COMMUNICATIONS: The Highway Department rolling assets are equipped with two-way radios capable of transmitting and receiving on a frequency of 151.100. Each employee is assigned a unique call number. Most private contractors working for the town communicate with the Highway Department using cell phones. The Highway Department maintains communications from the garage, and Police Highway Department dispatch.

The Superintendent of Schools or a designated official representative shall contact the Road Agent prior to 4:30 A.M. to determine the condition of the municipality's roads in order to determine the safety of students using school buses. The school representative shall make the decision to cancel or postpone school for that day.

F. ROADS NOT RECEIVING WINTER MAINTENANCE: The Town of Sandwich does not maintain some roadways as part of its ongoing winter maintenance activities. The areas not maintained by the town include:

- Town roads classified as Class VI
- Private roads

G. DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY: The municipality is not held responsible for damage to private property that is located within the public right of way. The right-of-way (ROW) is often 50 wide, and is often confused by property owners as their own property. In most cases, the ROW extends to 10 to 20 feet on either side of the paved or gravel road. Property owners often cultivate extensions of their lawns, place mailboxes, erect fences and/or build stonewalls in this area. Although these enhancements greatly improve the appearance of the road, they can be problematic and counter to good roadway maintenance. Landowners need to understand that the enhancements may be in the Town's ROW.

Property owners should not put bulk mulch, crushed rock, stonewalls, fences (visible and invisible), irrigation systems, trees or lawns in the Town's ROW. The town is not liable for damage that may occur to property in its ROW. Many items interfere with

heavy equipment and become a hazard for vehicles and pedestrians causing drainage failures and eventually causing road deterioration.

Mailboxes are permitted within the right of way for the purpose of convenience at the property owner's risk. The United States Postal bulletin #22102 states: "The Postal Service suggest using a semi-arch or extended arm support which allows snowplows to sweep near or under mailboxes without damaging supports and provides easy access to the mailboxes by carriers and customers."

1. Mailboxes should be installed at least three (3) feet from the edge of the pavement.
2. Installations should be sufficiently sturdy to withstand the weight of heavy snow resulting from plowing operations.

H. PLACEMENT OF SNOW UPON ROADS AND SIDEWALK: No snow is to be shoveled, blown, plowed or placed by any means onto the town roads or sidewalks or plowed across roadways to the opposite side of the road unless it is immediately cleaned up/removed to eliminate any danger or hazard to the public or to town vehicles.

I. POST STORM OPERATIONS: As determined by the Road Agent or his/her designee, snow banks resulting from previous accumulations will be pushed back or shoveled using the plow and wings of the dump trucks, grader or loader in order to make space for the future snowstorms.

QUESTIONS AND/OR CLARIFICATIONS RELATED TO THIS POLICY

All questions and/or clarifications of this policy and its related content should be addressed to the Board of Selectmen, who shall be responsible for the administration, revision, interpretation, and application of this policy.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

Date: **23 NOV 2015 / Signed copy on file in the Selectmen's Office**

Michael Yeager, Chairman

Willard G. Martin

Toby Eaton