



Winter Maintenance

FAQs

1) Why does the town get so much snow?

Answer: The town is located in one of the main snowbelt regions of the province. Cold northwest winds blow over the warmer waters of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron picking up moisture and then depositing the moisture in the form of snow on the land. Wasaga Beach, Collingwood and other parts of North Simcoe and Grey County receive large amounts of snow due to this lake effect. Areas south of Highway 89 generally do not receive the same amount of snow as in the snowbelt regions.

2) How does the town of Wasaga Beach determine what roads get plowed and when?

Answer: The town's winter maintenance is completed in accordance with its Winter Control Policy and the Provincial Minimum Maintenance Standards (O.Reg. 239/02). The town has designated 11 plowing routes and each route takes approximately six to eight hours to complete, depending on weather, traffic, available staff and equipment, and the number of vehicles parked on the street.

The following is the general priority for snow plowing and sanding/salting within the designated plow routes:

Roadway Priorities

a) Priority 1

- Arterial and Major Collector Roads and Bridges (example: River Road West)
- Designated transit routes

b) Priority 2

- Collector Roads (example: Ramblewood Drive)
- Municipal Offices and Facilities and municipal parking lots

c) Priority 3

- Local Roads, Side Streets and cul-de-sacs.

3) How is snow clearing handled for municipal sidewalks?

Answer: It's the objective of the town to clear sidewalks as soon as possible after a storm has ended and normally within 24 hours from the end of the storm event. Sidewalks are classified in accordance with the associated pedestrian traffic and proximity to high volume roadways, in addition to the ease with which they can be cleared. The town has three sidewalk classifications and they are as follows:

Class 1 – Sidewalks adjacent to high volume roadways with high pedestrian volumes, including school zones.

Class 2 – Balance of sidewalks that can be cleared with mechanized plow and/or blower equipment.

Class 3 – Sidewalks that require a snow blower or hand shoveling to clear.

Class 4 – Sidewalks that will not be cleared due to destination.

Class 2 sidewalks consist of the majority of the town sidewalks that can be cleared with mechanized plow equipment and are not adjacent to high volume roadways and/or have high pedestrian volumes.

Sidewalk operations will begin with snow clearing on Class 1 sidewalks. As staffing availability and weather conditions allow, Class 2 sidewalk operations will follow, and typically will continue on a regular shift basis, until complete.

Class 3 sidewalks will be the last to be addressed.

Typically, during a winter storm, roadways will be maintained with available staff, until such time as road and weather conditions allow for staff to be diverted to sidewalk operations. When staffing levels permit, Priority 1 sidewalks will be plowed at the same time as roads.

4) What substances does the town place on municipal roads during the winter?

Answer: Both sand and pre-treated salt is applied to municipal roadways depending on their classification. Sanding preparation begins with the placement of approximately 4,500 tonnes of Ministry of Transportation specified winter sand in the storage facility at the Public Works Yard. The sand is mixed with roughly five to 10 percent salt to maintain the workability of the winter sand mix and to improve de-icing capabilities. Normally, salt should never be applied when the temperature is below -12C; however, in the

presence of sun and heavy traffic volume, which creates higher road surface temperature, salt can sometimes be effectively applied to a temperature of -18C.

Salt is delivered regularly as required throughout the winter and is also stored at the Public Works Yard.

5) How does the town handle ice formation on roadways?

Answer: The minimum standard for the prevention of ice formation on roadways is doing the following in the 24-hour period preceding an anticipated formation of ice on a roadway:

- a) Monitor the weather;
- b) Patrol roadways;
- c) If it is determined that there is a substantial probability of ice forming on a roadway, as a result from the activities noted, the roadway will be treated to prevent ice formation.

Treating a roadway means applying material to the roadway, including but not limited to, salt, sand, or any combination of salt and sand.

The objective of sanding is to increase vehicular traction by applying sand/salt mixture either during or after the storm.

Sand is also used on designated roadways as the temperature drops below the levels of effectiveness for salt. However, when the temperatures do drop below these levels, the streets are sanded in the same manner as they would have been salted.

Complete sanding on all streets is only carried out to address slippery conditions, freezing rain, or general icy conditions, at the discretion of supervisory staff.

It's not the objective to provide bare pavement conditions on all roads. Straight salt is applied to arterial roads only to achieve bare pavement.

6) How does the town decide it needs to scrape or peel a snow-covered road?

Answer: Peeling will be initiated when severe rutting has formed along the hard-packed snow surface. Rutting is defined as troughs in compacted snow and ice which makes manoeuvring a vehicle dangerous. Ruts will usually be a minimum of 10 centimetres in depth before this condition warrants peeling.

Peeling operations consist of equipment that has the capability of applying a downwards force to remove the hard-packed snow (i.e. grader blade, loader bucket). Please note that standard snow plow trucks do not have the capability of applying a downward force. The blade and wing attached to standard snow plow equipment simply ride along the surface and rely on a combination of speed, blade/wing geometrics and gravity to displace the snow to the edge of the roadway.

Following the peeling operation, Public Works staff will remove the windrow of peeled hard-pack (and/or ice chunks) from the entrance to driveways (up to the property line), at the discretion of supervisory staff.

7) Does the town look after clearing snow around fire hydrants?

Answer: The clearing of snow around fire hydrants begins after the plowing of streets and sidewalks are completed and as resources permit. Fire hydrants will not necessarily be cleaned of snow after each snow storm. Fire hydrants will be cleared to provide adequate access to all ports when snow on the boulevard accumulates to a height that may interfere with the accessibility to the fire hydrant. The objective is to clear the snow from fire hydrants as soon as available equipment and personnel will allow.

Residents are encouraged to “adopt” a hydrant and keep it clear of snow. Such efforts by residents are in their own best interests as it affords better fire protection to their property as well as their neighbours.

8) Does the town monitor municipal drainage during the winter months?

Answer: Yes. Over the course of the winter season, Public Works staff monitors the weather conditions on a daily basis. When the forecast predicts consecutive days of milder temperatures (typically 2-3 days of greater than 0 C) supervisory staff will proactively investigate specified ditch locations to confirm weather snow and ice removal/clean-out is warranted. The intent of the winter drainage program is to maximize the capacity of existing ditch systems in areas that are historically subject to high run-off rates from melting snow or rain. Similarly, priority culverts and overland flow routes are inspected and cleaned out, as necessary.

9) What should I do if my property is damaged by the plow this winter?

Answer: Our snow plow operators are highly trained and take great effort to ensure properties aren't damaged by the snow plow blade. However, it can be difficult to determine exactly where the edge of the road is located. As a result, some sod damage may occur. If this does happen, please contact the Public Works Department at 705-429-2540. Your name and address will be put on a list and when warmer weather permits our staff will make repairs. Boulevard reinstatement will include topsoil and seed only.

10) Can I review the town's policies regarding winter maintenance?

Answer: Yes. The Winter Control Policy is available on the town website. You can find the policy here:

<http://www.wasagabeach.com/Document%20Library/Winter%20Control%20Policy%20-%20Rev%201%20Sept%202013.pdf>

11) How can residents help?

We all want our street cleared of snow quickly, but nothing slows down the work of snow plows more than cars parked on the street. In order to speed up snow removal, the town asks residents to help out by observing the following and abide by existing by-laws:

- Moving all vehicles from the roadway during winter storm events. Keeping parked vehicles off the street and sidewalks will speed up snow removal and increase community safety;
- By not parking vehicles on town streets, sidewalks, boulevards and parking lots between in accordance with municipal By-laws. Vehicles found to be impeding road and sidewalk snow clearing operations can be ticketed and/or towed at the owner's expense. Don't park at the end of your driveway or over the sidewalk;
- Refraining from placing snow on the roadway when shoveling or plowing driveways, entrances and sidewalks
- Piling snow on the right side of your driveway (when facing the street) when shoveling. This helps to minimize the windrow (pile) of snow created by the snowplow at the end of your driveway;
- Be a good neighbour. Help those who may not be able to shovel their driveways and walkways.
- Be patient. In heavy snowfalls it takes us longer to get all our streets cleared.

12) Why does the snow plow leave a windrow at the end of my driveway? Will the town come back and remove the snow?

Plow operators do not intentionally block driveways with snow. The plows have limited control over the amount and direction of snow that comes off the plow. When you are clearing the end of your driveway, please pile the snow on the right side (standing in your driveway and facing the street). This helps reduce the amount of snow that is pushed onto your driveway when a snow plow passes. The town does not have a driveway windrow removal program and will not return to clear the snow from your driveway.

13) I live on a corner lot – why do I have more snow in my driveway than my neighbours?

If you live on a corner property and the driveway is close to the corner, you can experience a buildup of more snow on your driveway than your neighbours. This is an unavoidable condition caused by the nature of the snow plow and its ability to manoeuvre turns.

14) Do you still have questions or concerns?

Please telephone public works at 705-429-2540 or e-mail the department at: publicworks@wasagabeach.com. You can also visit the department at 150 Westbury Rd. and speak to someone in person.