

WINTER WEATHER POLICY AND PRIORITIES

Pursuant to RSA 231:92-a, the Acworth Board of Selectmen hereby establishes the following policy and procedure for winter and inclement weather road maintenance.

PART A: POLICY OBJECTIVES

1. **OBJECTIVE:** The Town of Acworth seeks to provide timely, efficient and cost effective winter maintenance, snow removal, and ice control for the Town's residents and general motoring public.
2. **PROCEDURE:** The objective stated in Section 1 may best be achieved by implementation and execution of the procedures and tasks outlined in Part B of this policy, the Town's Winter Operations Snow Removal and Ice Control Procedures. Due to the many variables that are inherent in New England weather, each storm or weather event may require slightly different effort or emphasis on any number of maintenance tasks which, together, determine the overall winter maintenance, snow removal or ice control strategy.
3. **LEVEL OF SERVICE:** It is not reasonably possible to maintain a black, snow and ice free, road during a storm. The Town intends to utilize its best efforts, within the means available, to provide practical, safe access to homes, businesses, and municipal facilities during and after winter storms.
 - A. November 1 to April 15: no parking on town roads.
 - B. As a general policy, the Town will start to conduct snow removal Operations upon accumulations of two inches of snow fall. The Selectmen may, at their discretion, based upon weather information reports or prevailing conditions, elect to not remove snow until greater or lesser amounts have accumulated.
 - C. Pretreatment and ice control may be implemented prior to, during, or after a storm, as determined to be most effective, noting that salt has a much slower effect on melting snow and ice at temperatures below 25 degrees Fahrenheit, and thus may not be applied until it is warmer.
 - D. No winter sidewalk maintenance will be provided.
4. **COMMAND:** The Acworth Selectmen or the Selectmen's designee, shall direct all winter maintenance activities for the Town.
5. **EXECUTION:** This policy, including the standard operating procedure, is intended to serve as the normal procedure for winter maintenance, snow removal, and ice control for the Town of Acworth. One or more of the following, which may delay or prevent the implementation of this policy, may affect all or any part of normal operating procedure: Equipment Breakdown, Snow Accumulation in Excess of One Inch Per Hour, Freezing Rain or Other Icing Conditions, Traffic Congestion, Emergencies, Personnel Illness.
6. **NOTICE:** This policy shall be posted in appropriate public places in Acworth as determined by the Selectmen. All residents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this policy as it describes conditions that one might encounter before, during and after a winter storm event.
7. **ADOPTION:** The Acworth Board of Selectmen has adopted these policies, and the accompanying Part B, encompassing standard operating procedures on 7/6/2009. Revised 12/5/2022.

PART B: WINTER OPERATIONS, SNOW REMOVAL & ICE CONTROL PROCEDURES

1. **EQUIPMENT and PERSONNEL:** The assets available for winter snow removal and ice control are established within the parameters of the annual budget approved by the Town. In formulating the budget, the Town seeks to allocate sufficient funds for this purpose, but variable weather conditions may make budget projections inaccurate. When weather conditions require additional funds beyond those available in the budget, the Town will undertake such actions as are reasonably necessary to address such conditions, but the Town is bound by law to follow certain legal requirements and procedures that may delay immediate availability of funds for responses. The Highway Department utilizes all available assets of the Department as needed to address snow emergencies. The Town of Acworth has three fulltime personnel available for winter maintenance operations. The Town uses a backhoe to load trucks during winter operations. It is also used to load snow or push back intersections to create better lines of sight.
2. **ROUTES:** Plow routes may be altered from time to time for more efficient snow removal or cost efficiencies. The Highway Foreman shall notify the Board of Selectmen and all relevant personnel of such changes. Limited, temporary changes made in accordance with this section do not require approval of the Board of Selectman, unless specifically advised to the contrary.
3. **MATERIALS:** The Town bases its annual budget for snow removal materials in part on past usage and estimated weather forecasts. The sand is used as an abrasive and is applied to the road to improve traction for motor vehicles. Salt is employed as a deicing and anti-icing agent. The estimated annual supply of sand is produced each year, mixed with salt, and stockpiled at the Highway Department's sand/salt storage yard. Rock salt is purchased from a supplier as needed. Unless weather conditions require a different approach, winter maintenance routes are treated with a mixture of sand and salt, generally with a minimum amount of salt to prevent freezing of the mixture. This mixture may be adjusted according to the nature of the storm with additional salt added if needed. This mixture is applied to traveled ways. At the beginning and at the conclusion of a storm, salt may also be applied to the center of the paved roads where traffic can work the salt traveling either way. The salt, in conjunction with traffic action, creates a watery brine melting snow and ice, and resisting snow and ice packing on the roadway. The road crown further assists with the spreading of the brine mixture. The sand/salt mixture as well as salt itself, is only effective to approximately 25 degrees Fahrenheit. Other deicing agents are effective to lower temperatures, but cost and need for specialized equipment have forestalled their use at this time. Highway salt and sand supplies are for use on municipal property only.
4. **COMMUNICATIONS:** The majority of the Highway Department trucks are equipped with VHF band radios. Each plow and equipment operator is assigned a unique call number. The operator is aware of the importance of the radios, and maintains their operation and communication during a storm.
5. **SCHOOLS:**
 - A. Maintenance. The Town is not responsible for the clearing of snow and winter treatment of the Acworth Primary School parking lot. On days when school is in session, winter maintenance efforts are timed to coincide with bus routing and delivery of students to the extent reasonably practicable.
 - B. School Cancellation. The School Superintendent, or designated official representative, may contact the Highway Forman or Highway Department to determine the condition of the municipality's roads in order to determine the advisability of students using school buses. The school representative(s) shall make the decision to cancel or postpone school for that day.
6. **PARKING:** The town of Acworth regulates winter parking. There shall be no parking on Town Roads November 1 – April 15. One purpose of this winter parking ban is to allow winter maintenance crews unobstructed snow removal and ice control routes, as much as possible, to maintain the maximum effectiveness of their efforts.

7. **PLOW ROUTE PRIORITIES:** With a total of approximately 56 miles of roads, from which to remove snow and control ice and only the equipment specified in Appendix B to handle this activity, the Highway Department has to assign priorities for winter maintenance route activity in order to maximize the effectiveness of its efforts.
 - A. Town Roads. Main arteries will be given first priority for winter maintenance. The timing of maintenance on some routes will coincide with the Bus Routes with the intent to provide snow clearing within one hour of the regular bus schedule for that route.
 - B. The Town Office, will be plowed and skid resistant material will be applied as needed under private contract, with assistance from the Highway department provided as needed and as available.

8. **ROADS AND SIDEWALKS NOT RECEIVING WINTER MAINTENANCE:** The Town of Acworth does not maintain a number of roadways and sidewalks as part of its ongoing winter maintenance activities. The areas not maintained by the Town of Acworth include:
 - A. Class VI roads
 - B. Private roads, driveways and sidewalks
 - C. Roads, sidewalks and other areas maintained or within the jurisdiction of State, Federal or other units of government.

9. **DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY:**
 - A. The Town of Acworth assumes no responsibility for damage to private property that is located within the public right of way as such property is deemed an encumbrance that is not permitted to be located in the right of way. The right of way (ROW) is often 50' wide and is often mistaken by property owners as their own property. In most cases, the ROW often extends 10' to 20' either side of the paved or gravel surface of a road. Homeowners often cultivate lawns, place mailboxes, erect fences or stone walls in these areas, which improves the appearance of the road greatly, but may obstruct or interfere with maintenance being conducted on the roadway, including winter maintenance.
 - B. In the event of personal property damage occurring as a result of winter maintenance activities conducted by the Town of Acworth, the Town may be held responsible only for damages arising from negligence or other fault properly attributable to the Town. The Town will not be responsible for the repair or replacement of damaged property, with no exception.
 - C. The Town will not be responsible for damage to any vehicle which may be damaged during winter maintenance if the vehicle is parked in violation of any State law or local regulation, including any winter or snow removal parking limitation periods.

10. **PLACEMENT OF SNOW IN RIGHT OF WAY:** No snow is to be shoveled, blown, plowed or placed, by any means, onto Town roads or sidewalks or across roadways to the opposite side snow banks.

11. **ROADWAY OBSTRUCTIONS:** If any pedestrian, vehicle, or other item interferes with snow removal operations, the Town's personnel will seek the cooperation of the owner to remove the obstacle immediately. If the owner cannot be readily located or if the owner refuses to cooperate, the operator shall contact the Acworth Board of Selectmen for assistance.

12. **POST STORM OPERATIONS:** As determined by the Highway Foreman, snow banks resulting from the previous accumulations may be pushed back, or shelved, using the plow and wing of suitable equipment to make space for future snow storms.

13. **SNOW REMOVAL FROM TOWN ROADS:** During the initial stages of a storm, Town highways will be plowed and receive surface treatment as appropriate in accordance herewith. As parked vehicles are removed from streets, snow removal equipment may swing wider through the street to push back accumulated snow.

- A. Any vehicles that violate winter parking regulations are subject to ticketing and towing. Any vehicle which otherwise interferes with the reasonable efforts of the Town's winter maintenance is subject to removal after reasonable attempt to notify the operator.
- B. Snow removal operations may be delayed or ended in areas where vehicles are improperly parked or where they might interfere with snow removal operations.
- C. The Town is not responsible for damages to such vehicles arising out of Winter Maintenance operations or a result of towing.

14. **THE STATE POLICE** shall be notified of any vehicle obstruction and/or damage.

15. POLICY DISCRIBUTION LIST:

Collin Crosby, Highway Foreman
Ed Baker
Aaron Knight
Jennifer Bland
Jim Jennison
Ray Leonard
Kathi Bradt
Town Clerk
Library
Acworth Primary School