

# SUNFISH LAKE SNOWPLOWING POLICY

## 1. **Introduction**

The City of Sunfish Lake believes it is in the best interest of the residents for the City to assume basic responsibility for control of snow and ice and removal of debris or fallen trees prohibiting vehicular travel on city streets. Reasonable ice and snow control and debris removal 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 use private contractors to provide this service.

## 2. **When will the City start snow or ice control operations?**

The Mayor or City Engineer will decide when to begin snow or ice control operations. The criteria for that decision are:

- a. Snow accumulation of 2 inches or more;
- b. Drifting of snow that causes problems for travel;
- c. Icy conditions which seriously affect travel; and
- d. Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use of streets.

Snow and ice control operations are expensive and involve the use of limited personnel and equipment. Consequently, snowplowing operations will not generally be conducted for snowfall of less than 2 inches.

Debris or tree removal prohibiting vehicular travel will commence as soon as work forces can be mobilized after reports of the incident and passing of the storm.

## 3. **How snow will be plowed**

Snow will be plowed in a manner so as to minimize any traffic obstructions. The center of the roadway will be plowed first. The snow shall then be pushed from left to right. The discharge shall go onto the boulevard area of the street. When a plow goes on a bridge, the driver shall slow down so that snow does not go over the bridge if possible. In times of extreme snowfall, streets will not always immediately be able to be completely cleared of snow.

City streets must be passable to allow normal traffic flow and emergency vehicles to respond to all areas within the City. The City, however, does not guarantee bare, dry pavement after each snowfall or that streets will be totally free of ice and snow or driving hazards common to Minnesota winter weather.

City streets will generally be plowed within 24 hours from the start of a 2" or more snowfall. This requires 6-8 hours of operations for a normal snowfall of two to six inches. Delays may occur due to equipment breakdowns and or extreme weather conditions.

#### **4. Snow removal**

The City Engineer will determine when snow will be removed by truck from the area. Such snow removal will occur in areas where there is no room on the boulevard for snow storage and in areas where accumulated piles of snow create a hazardous condition. Snow removal operations will not commence until other snowplowing operations have been completed. Snow removal operations may also be delayed, depending on weather conditions, contractor availability and budget availability. The snow will be removed and hauled to a snow storage area. The snow storage area will be located so as to minimize environmental concerns.

#### **5. Priorities and schedule for which streets will be plowed**

The City has classified city streets based on street function, traffic volume, and importance to the welfare of the community. The following streets will be plowed first or have debris removed first. These are high volume routes, which connect major sections of the City and provide access for emergency fire, police, and medical services.

- Salem Church Road
- Charlton Road

Second priority streets are low volume residential streets.

- Angell Road
- Sunny Side Lane
- Windy Hill Road
- Windy Hill Court
- 55<sup>th</sup> Street West
- Roanoke Road
- Grieve Glen Lane
- Acorn Drive
- Zehnder Road

#### **6. Work schedule for snowplow operators**

Snowplow operators will be expected to work 8-hour shifts. In severe snow emergencies, operators sometimes have to work in excess of 8-hour shifts. However, because of budget and safety concerns no operator shall work more than a 12-hour shift in any 24-hour period. Operators will take a 15-minute break every 2 hours, with a half hour break after 4 hours. After a 12-hour day, operators will be replaced if additional qualified personnel are available.

#### **7. Weather conditions**

Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of the operators and equipment. Factors that may delay snow and ice control operations include severe cold, significant winds, and limited visibility.

#### **8. Use of sand, salt, and other chemicals**

The City is concerned about the effect of sand and salt on the environment and will limit its use for that reason. The City has implemented a “Pre-Treatment” practice that involves the contractor applying a salt-brine mix to the roadways prior to snow events. This pre-treatment inhibits snow and ice from sticking to the road surface and makes it easier to remove the snow and ice. This has resulted in more efficient clearing and less subsequent salt and sand treatments following a storm. In areas where additional attention is required due to icy conditions, the contractor will place additional salt and sand. It is the policy of the City to utilize a sand and salt mixture in the ratio of approximately 3 parts sand and 1 part salt. This provides for traction, but is not intended to provide for bare pavement during winter driving conditions. Application of the sand

and salt mixture is generally limited to priority “A” routes, steep grades, and high-volume intersections. Application is limited on lower volume streets and cul-de-sacs. The City cannot be responsible for damage to grass caused by the sand and salt mixture and therefore will not make repairs or compensate residents for salt damage to turf, plantings, or trees in the street right-of-way.

**9. Mail delivery**

The snowplow operators make every effort to remove snow as close as practical to provide access to mailboxes for the mail delivery. However, it is not possible to provide perfect conditions and minimize damage to mailboxes with the size and type of equipment that is utilized for snow removal. Therefore, the final cleaning adjacent to mailboxes is the responsibility of each resident.

Residents are encouraged to check with the Postmaster on how to correctly install mailboxes.

**10. Garbage/Recycling**

Efficient snow plowing requires that garbage and recycling containers be accessible for pickup and placed off street to allow snow removal. The container(s) may have to be placed in the driveway to meet both of these requirements. It is the responsibility of the resident to see that the container(s) is not in the way of the snowplow and is also in a spot accessible to the garbage and recycling truck(s).

**11. Complaints**

Complaints regarding snow and ice control or damage shall be taken during normal working hours and handled in accordance with the City’s normal operation procedures. Complaints involving access to property or problems requiring immediate attention shall be handled on a priority basis. Response time should not exceed twenty-four (24) hours for most complaints. 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.

This Policy was updated and adopted by the Sunfish Lake City Council on February 7, 2023.