



## SNOW PLOWING/ICE CONTROL POLICY

### I. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR POLICY

The City of East Bethel, being a growing City, needs to annually review and adopt a policy regarding efficient and timely removal of snow and control of ice in order to best provide for safe travel for the greatest number of persons in a cost effective manner and within the constraints created by funding, equipment, and personnel. This policy outlines the responsibility within the Public Works Department in order to accomplish this goal.

### II. POLICY

Each year the Public Works Department prepares a map of the City showing the public street system. This map clearly delineates thoroughfare and local residential streets. The map is then divided into individual plow routes and cul-de-sac routes for purposes of snow and ice control.

Within each of the areas, the City has classified city streets based on the street function, relative traffic volume, and importance to the welfare of the community. Those streets classified as priority "A" streets will be plowed first. These are higher volume streets, which connect major sections of the city and provide access for emergency fire, police and medical services and access to schools. The second priority streets (priority "B") are those streets providing access to commercial businesses. The third priority streets (priority "C") are low volume residential streets. The fourth priority street sections (priority "D") are cul-de-sacs. (See Exhibit A).

### III. PROCEDURES

The Public Works Manager or designated representative monitors the street conditions and notifies Public Works personnel of snow and ice conditions needing attention. Public Works personnel are notified in accordance with the Public Works Department Procedure for Emergency Calls.

The Public Works Manager or designated representative monitors street conditions and is responsible for making the decision to call out personnel and equipment to begin snow and ice control operations.

### IV. RESPONSIBILITY

The Public Works Manager or designated representative monitors the street conditions to determine the timing and amount of equipment and personnel necessary to clear the streets.

The Public Works Manager or designated representative has the responsibility of determining plow routes and sequencing of operations in accordance with priorities as established in Exhibit A. The manager shall retain the latitude to adjust sequencing or route assignments based on storm conditions, equipment availability and/or other conditions warranting changes.

It is the responsibility of each Snow Plow Operator in the Public Works Department to be aware of the department guidelines for Snow Plow Operators. (See Exhibit B). It is the Public Works Managers responsibility to discuss these guidelines as well as the entire Snow Plowing/Ice Control Policy with all Public Works personnel on an annual basis.

#### V. COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Snow plowing and/or ice control operations shall commence under the direction of the Public Works Manager. In his absence, a designated representative will consult and determine when and what operations will begin in accordance with provisions below.

The following guidelines will be used in determining the commencement of operations:

- A. Snow accumulation of 2 inches, with continual snowfall.
- B. Drifting of snow may warrant commencement of partial or full operations depending upon conditions.
- C. Icing of pavements may warrant partial or full operation depending upon extent and conditions.

#### VI. HOW SNOW WILL BE PLOWED

Snow shall be plowed in a manner so as to minimize traffic obstructions. The center of the roadway will be plowed first. The snow shall then be pushed from left to right with the discharge going onto the boulevard area of the right-of-way. It is the goal of Public Works to have the street system cleaned after a "typical" snowfall in approximately 12 hours following commencement of operations. Depending on snowfall conditions and duration of the storm, cleanup operations can widely fluctuate.

#### VII. USE OF SAND AND SALT

The City is concerned about the effect of sand and salt on the environment and will limit its use for that reason. Therefore, it is the policy of the City to utilize a sand and salt mixture in a manner appropriate for snow and ice conditions. This provides for traction, but is not intended to provide bare pavement during winter conditions. Application of the sand/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/salt mixture and therefore will not make repairs or compensate residents for salt damage to turf areas in the street right-of-way.

#### VIII. SUSPENSION OF OPERATIONS

Generally, operations shall continue until all roads 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 may be terminated after 10-12 hours to allow personnel adequate time for rest. There may be instances when this is not possible depending on storm conditions and other circumstances. Factors that may delay snow and ice control operations include: severe cold, significant winds and limited visibility. Any decision to suspend operations shall be made by the Public Works Manager or designated representative 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. 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, which extends approximately 15' beyond the curb location. The intent of the right-of-way is to provide room for snow storage, utilities 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. To be properly placed, a mailbox should be installed so its bottom edge is 45" to 47" above street level; with the post 36" back from the curb or front of the box. That amount of clearance is needed to keep the plow's wing from hitting the box. If there are any plastic newspaper tubes attached to the mailbox, they must be above 45" height requirement. The Public Works Department will replace damaged mailboxes with standard metal mailboxes on treated 4 x 4 wood posts or other posts approved by the Public Works Manager.

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

X. DRIVEWAYS AND SIDEWALKS

One of the most irritating 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. The drivers make every attempt to minimize the amount of snow deposited in driveways, but the amount can still be significant. City personnel do not provide driveway cleaning. The City shovels sidewalks for government buildings and does not shovel and/or plow any other sidewalks or trails within the city.

**Minnesota Highway Traffic Regulations**

160.27 Sub (5) Misdemeanors:

It shall be unlawful to obstruct any highway or to deposit snow or ice thereon.

169.42 Sub (1)

No person shall throw, deposit, place, or dump upon any street or highway, any snow, ice, etc.

XI. MAIL DELIVERY

The snowplow operators make every effort to remove snow as close to the curb line 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, in situations where city equipment is unable to remove the snow pile, the final cleaning adjacent to mailboxes is the responsibility of each resident.

XII. 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. 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.

EXHIBIT A

**PLOWING/SANDING PRIORITIES**

PRIORITY "A"

High volume connector streets, MSA roads, streets providing access to schools

PRIORITY "B"

Streets providing access to commercial property

PRIORITY "C"

Lower volume residential streets

PRIORITY "D"

Cul-de-sacs

## EXHIBIT B

# GUIDELINES FOR SNOW PLOW OPERATORS

1. Operators will be required to be on stand-by and able to report to work within one and one-half hours notice from November 1st to April 1st unless arrangements are made with the Public Works Manager or designated representative.
2. Operators will be responsible for the vehicle they are assigned to. This includes completing a daily maintenance and equipment check before and after each shift and reporting all deficiencies to the Public Works Manager. During snowplowing operations any and all downtime or breakdowns will be reported to the Public Works Manager or designated representative.
3. No snow removal vehicles shall be parked with less than three-quarters tank of fuel.
4. Operators shall not assist stranded vehicles by pushing, pulling or jump-starting. Operators may assist by calling for help, offering sand, or offering a helping hand.
5. To minimize damage, no equipment will exceed twenty miles per hour in residential areas.
6. The City recognizes that snowplow operators are exempt from traffic regulations set forth in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 169 while actually engaged in work on streets and highways, except for regulations related to driving while impaired and the safety of school children. The privileges granted herein to snow removal and ice control vehicles shall apply only if the vehicle is equipped with one lighted lamp displaying a flashing, oscillating or rotating amber or blue light placed in such a position on the vehicle as to be visible throughout an arc of 360 degrees. The foregoing provisions do not relieve the driver of an authorized snow removal or ice control vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons.
7. Operators will report all damage to the Public Works Manager or designated representative at the end of each shift.
8. When plowing and sanding is complete after each storm, salt/sand should be emptied from all trucks and all equipment should be cleaned and washed within a reasonable timeframe.
9. If the operator has completed assigned route, the operator will contact the Public Works Manager and will be assigned to assist with other routes.
10. Before leaving duty at the end of the shift, contact will be made with the Public Works Manager or designated representative.
11. No plowing of private property or towing of vehicles will be permitted unless it directly affects traffic. Any questions should be directed to the Public Works Manager.
12. Every effort will be made not to damage mailboxes and trash containers or other structures in the right-of-way.