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Item No. 1
Committee of the Whole
August 4, 2015

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Bruce DeBaie, Managing Director, Corporate Communications

DATE: July 23, 2015

SUBJECT: Winter Operations Communications 2014/15

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL MINUTES

February 24, 2015 – **MOVED** by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Deputy Mayor Nicoll, that Halifax Regional Council requests that the Winter Operations End of Season staff report include:

1. An evaluation of the best practises for management of streets, sidewalks, intersections and bus stops during icing conditions when salt does not work.
2. Options for on street parking such as longer enforcement of the winter parking ban and/or alternate side of the street parking during winter.¹

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* 2008, c. 39, s. 79 (1) (f) confers legislative authority to expend money required by the Municipality for snow and ice removal.

The *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* 2008, c. 39, s. 320 (1), s. 320 (2) and s. 320 (3) confers legislative authority to make by-laws relating to snow and ice removal.

The *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* 2008, c. 39, s. 322 (3) confers legislative authority to expend funds for the purpose of clearing snow and ice from the streets, sidewalks and public places in all, or part, of the Municipality.

The *Motor Vehicle Act* 1989 R.S.N.S. c.293, s.202 confers on the Local Traffic Authority the ability to declare an overnight parking ban during winter months.

BACKGROUND

¹ See Regional Council Minutes at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/c150224.pdf>

In support of the Winter Operations End of Season Report, Corporate Communications has compiled an overview of the public and council communications that were issued during the 2014/15 winter season.

DISCUSSION

Corporate Communications delivered a comprehensive marketing and communications program in support of Winter Operations in 2014/15. To ensure consistent Winter Operations messaging, Public Affairs provided the Mayor and Council with an information tool kit (Attachment 1) prior to the start of the winter season and 27 updates throughout the winter, typically following major winter weather events or cleanup operations.

Proactive communications were also undertaken on a range of issues during the 2014/15 winter season including (but not limited to): overnight winter parking ban restrictions, storm preparation and cleanup, and impact on municipal services (including transit, recreation, municipal offices and solid waste).

Public Affairs distributed 130 public service announcements (PSAs) to media, which were also posted on the municipality's website - Halifax.ca - and tweeted from the official municipal Twitter account, @hfxgov.

Copies of the Winter Operations Information Toolkit, public service announcements, and updates to Mayor and Council distributed during the 2014/15 winter season² are available on the Halifax.ca website links provided below

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Winter Operations Information Toolkit

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Tiffany Chase, Senior Communications Advisor, 902.490.5057

² Copies of the Winter Operations Information Toolkit distributed during 2014/15 winter season are available on the Halifax.ca website:

www.halifax.ca/snow/documents/Attach1-WinterOperationsInformationToolkit2014-15.pdf

Copies of the Winter Operations updates to Mayor and Council distributed during 2014/15 winter season are available on the Halifax.ca website:

www.halifax.ca/snow/documents/Attach2-WinterOpsCouncilUpdates2014-15.pdf

Copies of the Winter Operations Public Service Announcements distributed during 2014/15 winter season are available on the Halifax.ca website:

www.halifax.ca/snow/documents/Attach3-WinterOpsPSAs2014-15.pdf

Information Tool Kit

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Purpose

This information toolkit is designed to help you share information with your constituents about Winter Operations this season. It includes details regarding winter preparation, the overnight winter parking ban, opportunities for residents to sign up for timely notifications and service standards for clearing streets and sidewalks.

Toolkit Components

- Summary of key and supporting messages
- Sample update for Councillor newsletters
- Sample posts for Facebook
- Frequently asked questions
- Municipal service standards
- Links to key online resources

Key Messages

- Residents are encouraged to plan ahead for winter conditions.
 - Secure off-street parking
 - Clear away obstacles to snow clearing – this helps protect your property and ensure clearing efforts go as safely and smoothly as possible.
- The overnight winter parking ban:
 - Is in effect Dec. 15, 2014, through March 31, 2015.
 - Will be enforced between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m., during declared snow and ice events only.
- It is the responsibility of the resident and business owner to stay informed about the overnight winter parking ban.
 - Sign up for notifications by completing an online registration form at www.halifax.ca/snow/parkingban, emailing contact@halifax.ca or calling 311
 - Subscribers will receive timely alerts by phone, email, and/or text message when the ban is in effect and again when it is lifted.
- Winter street safety is a shared responsibility.
 - Municipal staff work hard to keep the streets and sidewalks clear of snow and ice, but motorists also have a responsibility to adjust their driving according to the conditions.

Supporting Messages

Winter Preparation

- Property damage caused by snow-clearing equipment is unfortunately not unusual, especially during severe winters like the one Halifax experienced last year.
- Here are some simple steps that residents and business owners can take before the snow starts to help protect your property and ensure clearing efforts go as safely and smoothly as possible:

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- When doing fall cleanup, look at trimming tree branches and shrubs that originate from your property that could obstruct visibility or access for snow-clearing equipment.
- If you know of similar issues with trees or plants on the municipal right-of-way, report those to 311 so staff can follow up before the winter comes.
- Planters, lawn decorations and any other portable objects near the sidewalk, on either side, should be removed before the winter.
- Items like sports equipment that may still be used should be safely stored when bad weather is in the forecast. These items can cause problems for street plows, but also sidewalk-clearing equipment when left between the curb and the edge of your property.
- Any permanent structures or objects too big to move should be marked with a reflector that will be visible above the snow to help crews identify obstacles.
- Vehicles that hang over or are parked on the sidewalk are prone to damage and become a dangerous obstacle for sidewalk crews. Residents are advised to secure off-street parking or risk being ticketed.
- Remember, between the curb and the sidewalk is often the only place that crews have to push the snow. Keeping this space clear enables faster and more efficient snow clearing.
- Residents and businesses are advised that they can be ticketed for clearing snow from their own driveway or property onto the street or sidewalk. This hampers clearing efforts for our crews and contractors.
- Some amount of damage during snow clearing is to be expected, especially when there is a lot of snow on the ground, visibility is bad or in older neighbourhoods that have narrower sidewalks.
- The municipality wants to assure residents that as in past years, damage to private property that has been reported and confirmed to be caused by snow-clearing equipment will be repaired by the responsible contractor or the municipality.
- Residents who sustain damage to their property or know of damage to municipal property should file a report by calling 311 or by filling out an online customer service form at <https://apps.halifax.ca/311>.
- By working together, we can ensure we're all better prepared for whatever this winter may bring.

Winter Safety

- Winter street safety is a shared responsibility. Our municipal staff work hard to keep the streets and sidewalks clear of snow and ice, but motorists also have a responsibility to adjust their driving according to the conditions.
- The following are some tips to help keep you and your family safe this winter:
 - In Nova Scotia, weather conditions can change quickly so motorists should always leave plenty of time to reach their destination.
 - If at all possible, don't drive during a storm. It's much safer to stay at home and wait until conditions improve.
 - Watch out for ice, especially on bridges, overpasses and in shaded areas.
 - Never assume that because the temperature is above zero that the roads are safe. Road salt doesn't work miracles, and is not effective below -10 degrees Celsius.

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- Adjust your speed to the conditions. Wet roads can freeze even if the air temperature is above zero.
- Follow at a safe distance. It can take up to 12 times further to stop on snow and ice than on dry pavement.
- Keep your vehicle in top working order and always carry a winter survival kit when travelling during the winter months.
- Never pass a plow clearing snow from the road. Whiteout conditions can reduce visibility and increase the chance of an accident.
- Sight lines are severely restricted around plows. Always remember, if you can't see the plow's side mirrors, the driver can't see you.
- Children should not play in the snow along the side of the road or anywhere that a snow plow is likely to operate.

Snow and Ice Clearing Budget

- The municipality's snow and ice clearing budget for 2014/15 is about \$20 million, which is in line with other years.
- In 2013/14, the worst winter season the Halifax region has seen in a decade, the municipality spent \$24,205,700 on winter operations.
- That means there was a total net deficit of \$4,210,500. However, the Snow and Ice reserve fund was not used, as the deficit was funded by the General Rate surplus.

Sidewalk Clearing

- We certainly understand people's frustration if the sidewalks are not cleared as quickly as they would like. However, it takes time for crews to get to all areas and they are working as fast as they safely can.
- Sidewalk clearing normally occurs within 12 to 36 hours after the end of a snowfall. Crews won't stop until all sidewalks are done.
- To help ensure clearing efforts go smoothly, residents are encouraged to move any objects or vehicles that may be obstructing the sidewalk near their home or business.
- Residents and businesses are advised that they can be ticketed for clearing snow from their driveway or property onto the street or sidewalk. This slows clearing efforts for our crews and contractors.
- We ask that people always use caution when travelling in the winter months, whether on foot or by car or bicycle, and we thank them for their patience and understanding as our crews work to get all the clearing done.
- Even before a snow event occurs, the municipality's winter operations team is set in motion to facilitate safe movement for both motorists and pedestrians.
- While the objective is to maintain sidewalks to a bare condition, many factors play a part in achieving that goal.
- Rapidly changing weather conditions, like sudden freezes after rain, wet snow packed to ice and freezing rain can produce a heavy ice build-up on sidewalks that is difficult to remove.
- Sand will be applied to provide a degree of traction on sidewalks, especially when temperatures drop and salt becomes less effective.

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Salt & Brine Operations

- In the past few years the municipality has adopted a more proactive approach to snow clearing by preparing the streets in advance with rock salt, brine or a mixture of the two, to help prevent the buildup of snow and ice during a weather event.
- Less snow and ice on the roads means safer conditions for residents, and it enables snow-clearing crews to do their work faster and more efficiently when a storm hits.
- Direct liquid application (DLA) is a newer technique in the municipality's overall salt management strategy that involves spraying the streets with saltwater, also known as brine. This minimizes the bond that forms between the surface of the road and snow or ice, similar to using Pam to prevent food from sticking to the pan.
- These preventative methods only work in certain conditions. For example, rock salt won't melt ice if it's extremely cold and you wouldn't spray the streets with brine if the forecast is calling for heavy rain.
- Winter operations crews evaluate the weather forecast and choose the best method in those circumstances to prepare the streets for snow and ice, and later to maintain clear, safe roadways throughout a weather event.
- Using brine on the streets is better for the environment because it means crews use less rock salt, a substance that often washes into nearby ditches and waterways.
- Using brine and salt ahead of a storm can also save time and money by making it easier to plow the snow off the streets.

Sample Update for Newsletters

Winter is fast approaching and that means many of us are turning our minds to snow. Last winter was one of the worst in the Halifax region in a decade. With more than 20 storms, some of them full-out blizzards, crews were kept busy keeping our streets and sidewalks clear of snow and ice so we were safe to travel.

Do you know that every time it snows, our municipal and contracted crews are responsible for clearing 3,800 lane kilometres of roads, 950 kilometres of sidewalks and walkways, and 3,600 bus stops across the municipality? That's a lot of ground to cover.

Some amount of damage during snow clearing is to be expected, especially when there is a lot of snow on the ground, visibility is bad or in older neighbourhoods that have narrower sidewalks. I would encourage you to follow these simple steps – before the snow starts – to help protect your property and ensure clearing efforts go as safely and smoothly as possible.

- **Trim any tree branches and shrubs that originate from your property.** These can obstruct access and visibility for snow-clearing equipment.
- **Remove planters, lawn decorations and any other portable objects** near the sidewalk before the winter. Items like sports equipment that may still be used should be safely stored when bad weather is in the forecast.
- **Mark any permanent structures or objects too big to move with a reflector** that will be visible above the snow. This helps crews identify obstacles.
- **Secure off-street parking.** Vehicles that hang over or are parked on the sidewalk are prone to damage and become a dangerous obstacle for sidewalk crews. Those in violation can be ticketed.

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As well, you have a responsibility to secure off-street parking during the winter months and seek information about when the overnight winter parking ban is enforced. Just like last season, the ban will be in effect from December 15 to March 31, and will be enforced only during declared snow and ice events, from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m.

The easiest way to stay informed is to sign up for notifications by filling out an online registration form at www.halifax.ca/snow/parkingban, email a request to contact@halifax.ca or call 311. If you signed up last season, then you do not need to register again.

Residents who subscribe will receive timely messages by phone, email, and/or text message, throughout the winter season, about the status of overnight winter parking bans in the Halifax region. The municipality also shares regular updates on the parking ban and other snow-related information on its online snow page, www.halifax.ca/snow and via Twitter, at [@hfxgov](https://twitter.com/hfxgov). And of course, residents can always call 311 with questions or concerns.

Please remember that winter safety is a shared responsibility. By working together, we can ensure that we're all better prepared for whatever this winter may bring.

Sample Posts for Facebook

Sample 1 – Winter Prep

Winter is fast approaching and that means many of us are turning our minds to snow. There are some simple steps you can take – before the snow starts – to help protect your property and ensure clearing efforts this season go as safely and smoothly as possible.

- **Trim any tree branches and shrubs that originate from your property.** These can obstruct access and visibility for snow-clearing equipment.
- **Remove planters, lawn decorations and any other portable objects** near the sidewalk before the winter. Items like sports equipment that may still be used should be safely stored when bad weather is in the forecast.
- **Mark any permanent structures or objects too big to move with a reflector** that will be visible above the snow. This helps crews identify obstacles.
- **Secure off-street parking.** Vehicles that hang over or are parked on the sidewalk are prone to damage and become a dangerous obstacle for sidewalk crews. Those in violation can be ticketed.

For more information on municipal snow and ice clearing operations, service standards, priority streets, salt management strategies and more, please visit www.halifax.ca/snow.

Sample 2 – Overnight Winter Parking Ban

The Halifax Regional Municipality is encouraging residents to think ahead and be prepared this winter, especially when snow is in the forecast.

Just like last season, the overnight winter parking ban will be in effect from December 15 to March 31, and will be enforced only during declared snow and ice events, from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. Residents have a responsibility to secure off-street parking during the winter months and seek information about when the parking ban is enforced.

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The easiest way to stay informed is to sign up for notifications by filling out an online registration form at www.halifax.ca/snow/parkingban, email a request to contact@halifax.ca or call 311. If you signed up last season, then you do not need to register again. Residents who subscribe will receive timely messages by phone, email, and/or text message, throughout the winter season, about the status of overnight winter parking bans in the Halifax region.

For more information on municipal snow and ice clearing operations, service standards, priority streets, salt management strategies and more, please visit www.halifax.ca/snow.

Sample Tweets

- Plan ahead. #hrmparkingban can be enforced 1-6AM from Dec 15 - Mar 31. Sign up for notices <http://ow.ly/rfsnY>
- Be prepared during a snow/ice event. Secure off-street parking for when #hrmparkingban is enforced <http://ow.ly/rfsEh>
- During a storm, all vehicles must be removed day or night. Find off-street parking b/f bad weather hits <http://ow.ly/rfsEh>
- Don't get caught in the snow! Sign up now for updates on #hrmparkingban & be ready when it's enforced <http://ow.ly/rfsnY>
- Did you know under the MVA, parked vehicles can be ticketed or towed at any time if they're impeding snow clearing? Find off-street parking!

Frequently Asked Questions

<http://www.halifax.ca/municipalops/Winter/WinterFAQ.php>

1) When will my street be plowed?

During and after a snowfall, our snow and ice crews are out in full force working to clear the streets and sidewalks. Crews prioritize which streets to salt, sand or plow based on [service standards](#) approved by Regional Council. Priority 1 streets include main arteries, bus routes, hilly areas and streets leading to schools and public buildings. Once those are complete, then crews will clear residential streets, known as Priority 2 routes.

Service standards require that Priority 1 streets be completed within 12 hours after the end of a snowfall and 24 hours for Priority 2 streets. Sidewalks may take up to 36 hours. Things like the amount of snow, time of day and equipment breakdown can affect whether or not your street might be plowed in that time period. Residents are asked to be patient and know that crews will not stop until all the streets and sidewalks are completed.

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2) Who is responsible for clearing the sidewalks?

In 2013, Regional Council directed staff to provide sidewalk snow and ice clearing, including salting and sanding, for all sidewalks in the Halifax region. Previously, Peninsula Halifax, Spryfield, and Armdale had not received this service. The change added another 200 kilometres of sidewalks to municipal clearing operations. That means that every weather event, municipal and contracted crews are responsible for clearing 3,800 lane kilometres of roads, 950 kilometres of sidewalks and walkways, and 3,600 bus stops across the municipality. Residents and businesses are responsible for clearing their own driveways, snow that has been plowed off the sidewalk into their driveways, and any pathways on their own property.

3) When will my sidewalk be plowed?

The [service standards](#) dictate that Priority 1 sidewalks, abutting main arterial roads, should be cleared within 12 hours after the end of a snowfall. Priority 2 sidewalks, abutting transit routes and in front of schools, are cleared within 18 hours after the end of a snowfall. Priority 3 sidewalks, abutting local roads, are cleared within 36 hours after the end of the snowfall.

4) When will the bus stops be plowed?

Bus stops along Priority 1 and 2 sidewalk routes are opened up as much as possible during sidewalk clearing; however, most aren't fully cleared until all the streets are complete, as the snow needs to be removed with larger equipment and trucks. These operations are carried out under the requirements of the [Nova Scotia Temporary Workplace Traffic Control Manual](#). Much of this work is done after hours, when lighter traffic conditions enable the work to be carried out more safely.

5) When will the bike lanes be plowed?

The bike lanes run along the curb of the street, which is where the plows are depositing cleared snow. Designated bike lanes will be cleared following a snow or ice event, but they are not considered a top priority and there is no guarantee as to when that will happen. The first concern for snow-clearing crews are the Priority 1 and 2 streets, Priority 1 and 2 sidewalks, and then bus stops. Whenever possible, cyclists should stay off the roads in the hours after a snow or ice event and use extreme caution if they do decide to travel by bicycle.

6) When will the accessible parking spaces be cleared?

Winter Operations has a list of all the accessible parking spots in the Halifax region and will ensure that all spots are cleared after it snows. Similar to bus stops, accessible parking spots are opened up as much as possible during initial clearing efforts; however, most aren't fully cleared until all the streets are complete, as the snow often needs to be removed with larger equipment and trucks. Much of this work is done after hours, when lighter traffic conditions enable the work to be carried out more safely. Residents with accessible parking passes are encouraged to find alternative parking during and after a storm, to enable more efficient clearing, as crews are unable to remove the snow when a vehicle is parked in the spot.

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7) Who is responsible for damage caused by snow-clearing equipment?

As part of their contracts, performance-based contractors who plow most of the sidewalks in the region are responsible for repairing any damage their equipment causes. The municipality would repair and pay for damage caused by its in-house clearing equipment.

Residents who have sustained damage to their property or know of damage to municipal property caused by snow-clearing equipment should report the damage by calling 311 or by filling out an online [customer service form](#). Unless there is an immediate safety concern, most damage will be repaired in the spring, when the weather improves.

8) What can I do to help mitigate any damage to my property this winter?

Some amount of damage during snow clearing is to be expected, especially when there is a lot of snow on the ground, visibility is bad or in older neighbourhoods that have narrower sidewalks. But there are some simple steps that residents can take before the snow starts to help protect their property and ensure clearing efforts go as safely and smoothly as possible.

- **Trim any tree branches and shrubs that originate from your property.** These can obstruct access and visibility for snow-clearing equipment.
- **Remove planters, lawn decorations and any other portable objects** near the sidewalk before the winter. Items like sports equipment that may still be used should be safely stored when bad weather is in the forecast.
- **Mark any permanent structures or objects too big to move with a reflector** that will be visible above the snow. This helps crews identify obstacles.
- **Secure off-street parking.** Vehicles that hang over or are parked on the sidewalk are prone to damage and become a dangerous obstacle for sidewalk crews. Those in violation can be ticketed.

9) What should I do during and after a winter storm?

We ask that residents stay home, if at all possible, and be prepared when there is a major snowfall in the forecast. You should remove your cars from the street prior to and during snow-clearing operations. Your vehicles could be ticketed or towed if they remain parked on the street once the winter parking ban is in effect. We also encourage you to help others, especially seniors and people with disabilities, to clear their driveways. Also, if you must put garbage or green bins out during a storm, please ensure you place them so they will not interfere with street or sidewalk snow plowing. If you're unsure whether collection will happen, call 311.

10) How do crews choose the equipment they use to clear the sidewalks?

Depending on the area, the sidewalks are cleared by either an in-house crew or a performance-based contractor. It is up to the private company to decide what type of equipment it uses to clear the sidewalks. Most contractors use a variety of machinery, including skid-steer loaders (often referred to as Bobcats) and small articulated tractors. These different machines provide the ability to plow, pile or blow snow, salt and sand.

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11) My street isn't cleared yet. What happens if emergency vehicles need access?

In the event of an emergency and 911 has been notified, dispatchers will be in touch with municipal snow-clearing crews to ensure emergency vehicles have an efficient and accessible route. If a street has not yet been plowed, the municipality will dispatch a snow-clearing crew working in the area to come clear a path for the emergency vehicle.

12) Who is responsible for clearing snow from around fire hydrants after a storm?

Halifax Water is responsible for clearing the snow away from Halifax Water-owned fire hydrants within its service area. There are thousands of these hydrants across the region and it takes a significant amount of time and effort to clear snow away from every hydrant, particularly after a heavy snowfall. If residents or business owners know of a fire hydrant in their area and are able to safely clear the snow away, they are encouraged to do so. The help is greatly appreciated and could save precious time in the event of an emergency. Maintenance of private hydrants, including snow removal, remains the responsibility of the hydrant owner.

13) When am I allowed to park on the street?

The Halifax Regional Municipality has an overnight winter parking ban, which is in effect from December 15 until March 31; however, it is enforced during declared snow and ice events only. When the ban is enforced, it restricts any on-street parking between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m. Vehicles in violation of the ban, when it is being enforced, will be ticketed.

In addition, Section 139 of the [Motor Vehicle Act](#) is also enforced at all times, regardless of the weather. The Act states that parked vehicles obstructing snow removal or winter maintenance operations may be ticketed or towed at the owner's expense, no matter the time or date. These restrictions help crews to clear the streets and improve conditions for everyone's safety.

14) How do I know when the parking ban is in effect?

It is the responsibility of the resident to seek information about the overnight winter parking ban. The easiest way to stay informed is to sign up for notifications by filling out an [online registration form](#), email a request to contact@halifax.ca or call 311. Residents who have subscribed will receive timely messages by phone, email, and/or text message, throughout the winter season, about the status of overnight winter parking bans in the Halifax region. As well, the municipality shares information regularly on its online [snow page](#) and via Twitter, using [@hfxgov](#). Residents can also call 311 for information on the parking ban status.

15) Why does the plow push snow in my driveway? Who will clear it?

When plowing streets, the plow has nowhere to push the snow except to the curb. It's very important that the snow is pushed well back to open up all catch basins and provide access for emergency vehicles. The plow often makes several passes to push the snow back as far as possible. This means that snow may be pushed into your driveway, sometimes more than once during the same storm. We understand this is an inconvenience but again, this is to help keep the streets safe and clear. Shovelling driveways is the responsibility of residents. The municipality does not have the resources to clear private property.

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16) Are there programs to help seniors and people with disabilities with snow removal?

The Halifax Regional Municipality is once again partnering with the YMCA to provide a program to assist seniors and other persons with disabilities with snow removal during the winter months. Under the Senior Snow Removal Program, those that qualify will have snow removed from their front steps and walkways, back steps and a path to an oil tank, if applicable. Residents are responsible for their own driveway and the municipality takes care of sidewalks. If you're able, residents are encouraged to help their neighbours out, if they know of someone in need. For more information about the Senior Snow Removal Program, please call 902-483-3678.

17) Why do snow plows sometimes plow one lane only?

Based on the amount of traffic on the main arteries, or the total amount of snowfall, plows often make a pass in and out of secondary roads to open them up for the residents. Once the traffic on the main arteries has dissipated, they will then go back and complete the main arteries, followed by the secondary streets, pushing the snow back to the curb. Also, when the amount of snow is so great that the smaller plow units cannot push all the snow to the curb, they will make a pass in and out to open it up, and then a larger unit or a front-end loader will eventually come by and push the snow back to the curb. Generally speaking, the street is not complete until the snow has been pushed back as far as the curb.

18) Is anyone allowed to clear snow into the streets?

It is against [By-Law S-300](#) to throw or pile snow in the travelled portion of the street, whether it is a contractor or a private citizen. Residents can use the online [customer service form](#) to report the violation or call 311.

19) Why doesn't the plow do a better job clearing cul-de-sacs?

It is very difficult for larger plows to manipulate cul-de-sacs. As more snow builds up throughout the winter, these areas present a unique challenge for snow-clearing operations. Whenever possible, a smaller plow is used to clean up the cul-de-sac and when required, a front-end loader is used to complete the clearing. This type of equipment is first used for the clearing of streets and other priorities. Depending on scheduled work and equipment availability, crews attempt to clear the accumulated snow once a significant amount has built up.

20) Why does the municipality spray a liquid salt solution on the roads?

Direct Liquid Application, a technique using salt brine, is part of the municipality's overall salt management strategy. Brine, whether sprayed directly on the road surface or produced when rock salt is mixed with fallen snow, acts as an anti-icing agent to prevent the bond between snow and pavement. This allows the snow plow to remove the excess snow easier.

21) Why is the plow dropping salt when I live in a 'sand only' area?

In order to keep our sand stockpile from freezing, a small amount of salt is mixed in with the sand. This is the only salt that should be used if you are in a 'sand only' area. If you see salt being applied in a restricted area and have specific information on the vehicle, you should report this to 311.

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Service Standards

Regional Council approved service standards for snow and ice removal after the end of a snowfall, which municipal and contracted crews make every effort to achieve:

ROADS: 12 hours for main roads & bus routes, 24 hours for residential & rural streets.

SIDEWALKS: 12 hours on main routes, 18 hours for school & bus routes, 36 hours for residential & rural streets.

Please note, in snowfalls greater than 30 centimetres, or in blizzard conditions, service levels may not be achieved. Municipal and contracted crews will continue working until all streets and sidewalks are clear and safe from snow and ice. During significant snow events, "cut-throughs" (one-lane plowing) may commence on residential streets to allow single-lane access prior to full street-width clearing. In the case of multiple snowfalls, where there has been insufficient time to complete all sidewalks, operations will return to the highest priorities and start over. Plowing, from either street or sidewalk operations, will result in snow at the end of residents' driveways. It is the responsibility of the property owner to remove this snow.

For specific information on service standards for Priority 1 & 2 streets and sidewalks, please visit <http://www.halifax.ca/MunicipalOps/Winter/SnowServiceStandards.php>.

Online Resources

Municipal Snow Page: www.halifax.ca/snow

Parking Ban Notifications: <http://www.halifax.ca/snow/parkingban/index.php>; contact@halifax.ca

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/hfxgov>

Priority Street Finder Tool: <http://www.halifax.ca/snow/StreetPriorityFinder.php>

Street Directory (who clears my roads?): <https://apps.halifax.ca/streetdirectory>

Motor Vehicle Act of Nova Scotia: <http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/motor%20vehicle.pdf>

Highway & Road Conditions (Province of Nova Scotia):

<http://www.novascotia.ca/tran/telenium/roadconditions.asp>

Highway Web Cams (Province of Nova Scotia): <http://novascotia.ca/tran/cameras/>

Environment Canada (Nova Scotia Weather):

https://weather.gc.ca/forecast/canada/index_e.html?id=NS

Boundaries for Municipal Overnight Winter Parking Ban:

<http://www.halifax.ca/snow/documents/OvernightWinterParkingBanmap.pdf>

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Key Staff Contacts

| Municipal Operations | | |
|--|---|--|
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