

# Mount Joy Township Winter Road Maintenance Policy

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Every winter storm is different, and it is impossible for the Township to create a one-size-fits-all approach to winter road maintenance operations. This policy is intended to provide general guidance which the Township attempts to follow in most situations, but it should not be considered a guarantee of the type of operations. All decisions regarding the type of winter maintenance for a particular storm are made by the Township Roadmaster or his designee.

## Priority Routes

Priority A: All roads designated as [Snow Emergency Routes](#) per Chapter 127 of the Code of Ordinances.

Priority B: All other collector streets and rural roads with a speed limit of 35 mph or higher.

Priority C: All other roads (primarily residential streets)

During winter storms, the Township's first priority is to keep Priority A routes passable. As conditions and time permit, crews will move to Priority B routes then to Priority C routes.

In addition to approximately 65 miles of Township roads, the Township also has contracts to provide winter maintenance for approximately 2 miles of other roads. The Township is paid for the services provided under these contracts. Township tax funds are used to pay for maintenance of the public Township roads.

## Types of Winter Maintenance

### Deicing

Deicing operations normally consist of spreading salt onto the street. In colder temperatures, calcium chloride may be used. Deicing materials are placed on the street by dump trucks with spreaders installed. The Township has four dump trucks; three dump trucks require a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and one dump truck only requires a regular Class C Driver's License. Typically, during deicing operations, material can be spread to cover both travel lanes on the road with one pass of the truck. It typically takes 2 ½ hours to make a single application of deicing material on all Township streets using the three large dump trucks.

Deicing is used during ice storms and can also be effective to melt small accumulations of snow on the roadway.

## **Plowing**

When snow has accumulated on the roads, plowing operations are used. In addition to the four dump trucks, the Township has two pickup trucks and a tractor which can be equipped with plows. Normally the dump trucks are used on the main roads while pickup trucks are better equipped for residential streets especially cul-de-sacs. The dump trucks have larger plows, but they are only equipped to push snow to the side of the road. The pickup trucks have V-plows which have more flexibility to move snow to specific locations in tight spaces.

Depending on the timing of the storm and the temperature, the roads may be salted at the beginning of a storm to keep snow from freezing onto the street and keep the street passable for longer at the beginning of the storm. When the pavement is cold, salt may be applied after the road has been plowed to melt any residual snow.

Plowing requires several passes along each road in both directions, depending on the width of the street. Plowing all of the streets in the Township takes approximately 8 to 12 hours after snow has stopped falling, with all six plow trucks deployed.

## **Other Operations**

During major storms, the Township may deploy additional equipment. A loader is used for major drifts. When the accumulation of snow on narrow residential streets reaches a certain point, the Township may also load snow onto a dump truck and haul it off the street.

## **Crews/Scheduling**

The size of the crew deployed will depend on the severity of the storm. The Township's regular staff is always "on-call" for winter road maintenance. The Township has three regular Public Works employees with CDLs to run the large dump trucks. These employees are normally used for deicing operations.

For larger storms and those requiring plowing, other Township staff are used and the Township has several on-call employees available to run equipment as needed.

The Township Roadmaster keeps an eye on the forecast and determines the level of staffing needed to run equipment for a particular storm. For storms with an extended duration, the staff may be rotated in shifts to ensure safe operations by allowing employees to have adequate rest.

## **Constraints to Winter Maintenance Operations**

Winter maintenance operations are most efficient when the Township's vehicles do not have to compete with other vehicles on the road and there are no vehicles parked on the streets.

Driveways – There are thousands of driveways along Township roads. It is unrealistic for the Township to turn plows to avoid placing snow in front of driveways. Residents are urged to wait until plowing operations are finished to remove snow at the end of their driveways. Clearing out

the end of the driveway before plowing operations are completed may result in the need to clear out the driveway again. Residents should be aware plow trucks may make several passes past their driveway. In some cases, the Township first makes a pass through each road to get a lane open and then comes back at a later time to push the snow back to the edge of the road or curb. The Township will not return to developments where cars are parked along the street preventing the plows from plowing the entire width of the street on the first pass. If residents move vehicles from the driveway to the street to facilitate clearing the driveway, these vehicles should be moved back into the driveway as soon as the driveway is finished so the plows can clear the entire street.

Mailboxes – Like driveways, the Township cannot open up access to every mailbox located on a Township street. If there are no cars on the street, the Township makes every effort to plow the entire paved width of the street which should make most mailboxes accessible. However, obstructions in the street, such as parked cars, will prevent the plows from pushing back the snow to the edge of the street. Residents should ensure that mailboxes do not hang out over the street or they may be damaged during plow operations. The Township is not responsible for damage to mailboxes which overhang the street. Mailboxes located outside of the paved portion of the street may be eligible for reimbursement if directly hit by a Township vehicle in accordance with [Resolution 27-2005](#).