



## **Town of Arnprior WINTER CONTROL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **What is “winter control”?**

Winter control includes planning and scheduling of processes related to the maintenance of roads during winter conditions, as well as, undertaking the actual process which includes, snow plowing, snow removal, sanding and salting, sidewalks and clearing of hydrants.

### **Which streets and sidewalks get plowed first and why?**

Streets designated as “priority” are cleared first then crews take care of the remainder of the streets.

Priority roads carry the higher volumes of traffic and are most easily identified as arterial (main) roads or collector (secondary) roads. These are the roads people use to get in and out of town, to business areas, medical facilities and schools. After priority roads, the route is established to plow, sand or salt in the most timely and effective manner.

### **Why spread salt on the roads before plowing?**

The Town spreads rock salt on streets with minimal snow cover prior to plowing. The salt is spread down the centre of the road in a fairly narrow band. The snow assists the salt through a chemical reaction, to become a brine (i.e. liquid).

The liquid (rock salt & snow) helps prevent snow and ice from bonding to the road surface, improving traction. The salt remains on the driving portion of the roadway.

When the plows come by, mid-stream or end of the storm, the snow is easily plowed and does not stick to the road surface.

This process is not as advanced as spraying (anti-icing) of magnesium chloride on streets in advance of a snow storm to improve road safety. Magnesium chloride liquid is applied at various concentrations depending on temperature and anticipated volumes of snow.

## **Why are there piles of snow along the edge of the road?**

Snow is plowed to the edge of the road by the sander truck as well as the sidewalk plow. This creates a pile or windrow along the edge (curb line) of the road for future snow removal (snow blower &/or loader). This is only undertaken on streets where we have snow removal operations.

Generally in the evening or overnight, the blower will travel the roadside, blowing the snow into trucks to be transported to the snow dump.

## **Why does the plow go by once, and after I clean my sidewalks and driveway, the plow comes by again?**

The sander trucks are efficient to clear a single lane and get traffic moving, then on a priority basis, snow equipment will come back to your street and plow the rest of the street to the curbs or back of sidewalks.

This not only clears sidewalks in areas where we do not undertake 'sidewalk clearing / snow removal', but also ensures adequate storage for future snowfalls.

A sander truck with a plow and wing spans only 16'. If plows are angled, this distance is reduced. This typically requires a sander truck to travel a roadway 4 times (2 times each direction).

## **Why can't the trucks plow all the snow to the other side of the street where there are no sidewalks or driveway?**

Snowplows are designed to plow snow to the right hand side. In order to plow all the snow to one side, the equipment would have to drive on the wrong side of the road creating an unsafe traffic situation and this would take more time which means the streets not serviced yet would have to wait longer.

## **There is always a vehicle parked on the street and the plow makes a mess trying to get around it. Can't you have it towed away?**

During the day, unless the street is posted as "No Parking" or has specific parking restrictions, it is legal to park on the road.

However, by-law 6000-11 states that no person shall park a vehicle on any roadway during the months of December, January, February and March (December 1 to March 31) whether attended or unattended between the hours of 2:00 am and 7:00 am.

One of the main obstacles for equipment operators is parked vehicles. Once snow starts, removing your vehicles from the street until the roads are cleared will allow the operators to remove the snow more efficiently.

## **I live on a corner lot. Why does the plow put so much snow in my driveway?**

Residents living on corner lots or the first on the right of an intersection usually get more snow deposited in their driveways. When the snowplow turns right it sweeps a much larger area of the road than when it is traveling in a straight line, as well, the snow also does not discharge from the plow truck. Turning right effectively makes the plow push most of the snow ahead instead of moving it from the centre of the road to the side. The first property and driveway encountered after the plow straightens out usually gets more snow than others in the immediate area.

## **Why is there more snow on my side of the street or I get more snow dumped in my driveway than my neighbour?**

There are several factors that affect why one area has more volume than another, including:

- Sun / shade
- Direction home faces (south, north, east, or west)
- Number and distance between driveways
- Adjacent to a corner or curve
- Prevailing winds / drifting
- Vehicles / obstacles in roadway
- Neighbour pushes their snow onto the street
- Side of driveway that residents pile their snow
- Centre cross-over of plow

## **Why can't the Town remove snow from my driveway entrance?**

There would be a significant investment in equipment and increase in the winter control budget to remove snow from over 3,500 entrances in Arnprior. The present service is the most economical to the taxpayer.

When shoveling your driveway, we suggest that you pile the snow on the left side of the driveway (facing the property), NOT on the roadway. This will give you a better line of vision of oncoming traffic, and when our plows go by we will not drag your shoveled piles back into your driveway entrance.

## **Why can't the Town remove the snow from the sidewalk in front of my property?**

As with driveway snow clearing, when you consider the length of sidewalks in the Town, it is just too costly and time consuming to use additional people and equipment to perform this service for all areas.

Although you are not required to clear the sidewalk in front of your home, it does help to reduce the amount of snow volume in your driveway when the plow passes by. Also, you are providing a clear and safer access for residents using the sidewalk.

## **May I place the snow from my driveway onto the traveled portion of the street?**

NO. Placing snow on the traveled portion of the roadway is not permitted under the Town's By-law. This regulation helps to ensure that potentially dangerous situations for motorists are avoided.

## **I have trouble shoveling my sidewalk and/or driveway. What can I do?**

Hopefully a friend, neighbour or a relative will be able to assist you. A young person in the neighbourhood could be hired for a small fee or a local community group or church may have a volunteer who will lend a helping hand. There are also a number of private snow clearing contractors who provide this service. Check the Yellow Pages for listings.

## **The snow bank at the street corner is too high and I cannot see oncoming traffic. What can be done?**

Every attempt is made to keep snow banks at corners to a minimum and is done between snowfall events. Special concerns should be directed to the Public Works Department at 613-623-4231.

## **I have to get out of my driveway for work / an appointment / etc. and the street has not been plowed. What should I do?**

During periods of heavy snowfalls, there may be delays. It is always best to plan ahead. If you know it is going to snow, leave yourself an extra hour or so when travelling in winter conditions. Don't drive unless absolutely necessary, and please, be patient. If you must drive, please ensure your vehicle is equipped with appropriate tires and maintained properly for winter conditions (i.e. tires, fuel, windshield wiper blades and washer fluid, anti-freeze, blankets, etc.).

## **What about the fire hydrant in front of my house?**

Obstructed fire hydrants can cause a delay in fire fighting and rescue operations. The Town clears snow that is obstructing access to fire hydrants as soon as feasible, however due to limited equipment and operators, this may not always be completed as quickly as we would like.

Residents are urged to ensure that fire hydrants, as well as fire escapes, are clear of obstructions and snow accumulation.

## **Why aren't the trucks always out plowing when snowing?**

As with any job, employees are restricted under legislation, to work a maximum number of hours. Winter control schedules take into account weather conditions, air and roadway temperature, weather station data, available staff and equipment. The Town has contracted drivers and/or equipment to assist in winter control, as required.

## Why does water pond around the catchbasins?

Snow, ice and debris from roads and sidewalks can block catch basins (water drains). When this occurs, the possibility exists that melting snow will have nowhere to drain and create flood like conditions.

The severity of potential flooding is determined by the snow volumes, how quickly the snow melts and how much rain is associated with that melt.

Maintaining open drains (covers exposed) is key to reducing potential flood conditions. Do not pile snow on top of drains, and clear leaves and debris from around the cover in the fall and spring.

## How can I help the Town do a good job?

- Move all vehicles from the roadway during winter storm events.
- Refrain from placing snow on the roadway when shoveling or plowing driveways, entrances and sidewalks.
- Shovel the sidewalk in front of your home or business.
- Remove snow from around fire hydrants.
- Keep drainage catch basins clear of snow, ice and debris.
- Be a good neighbour and help those who may not be able to shovel their driveways or walkways.
- Be patient. In heavy snowfalls it takes longer to get all our streets cleared.



Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Town of Arnprior**