

RESOLUTION 13-02

ESTABLISHING A SNOW AND ICE CONTROL POLICY Supersedes 08-07

WHEREAS, the Town Board (“Board”) of Ida Township (“Town”) is the road authority and provides maintenance for approximately 60 (sixty) miles of road in the Town;

WHEREAS, the Board, as the road authority, provides for snow and ice control on the town roads it has designated to receive winter maintenance;

WHEREAS, the Board secures its snow and ice control services through contract with an independent contractor (“Contractor”);

WHEREAS, the Board determines it is in the best interest of the Town to develop a policy to set out how snow and ice control activities will be conducted on town roads considering the Town’s limited resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board hereby adopts the following as the snow and ice control policy for the Town;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any Contractor performing snow or ice control services for the Town shall follow this policy.

I. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

In developing this policy for how to best undertake snow and ice control activities in the Town, the Board has had to balance a number of factors including, but not limited to, the following: public safety; the amount of funds available for these activities; the wish to maintain an efficient transportation system; enable the delivery of emergency services; avoid damage to Town property and personal property; and the cost effective allocation of resources. A further explanation of some of these policy considerations follows:

1. **Budgetary**: The funds the Town has available for snow and ice control are derived from two sources. The first is the town road and bridge tax levy that is set by the town electors at the annual town meeting held in March. The second source of funds comes from the gas tax imposed and collected by the state, a small portion of which is distributed to towns to help maintain their roads. The Board has no direct control over either source of funding. A proposed levy is submitted to the town electors at the annual town meeting, but the actual amount of the Town’s road & bridge levy is determined solely by a vote of the electors.
2. **Contract for Services**: The Board also contracts with [an independent contractor] for the following services and/or equipment:
 - Road Grading equipment and trucks used for snow plowing and sanding.

Because the Town obtains snow and ice control services through a non-exclusive contract, it does not have direct control over the availability of personnel, equipment, or the timing of the service delivery. The Town indicates through this policy and the service contract the work to be performed and the performance expectations, but the contractor must remain free to exercise initiative, judgment, and discretion in how best to perform or provide the services.

3. **Safety, Equipment Damage, & Effectiveness**: Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of operators or pose an unreasonably risk of damaging equipment. Once initiated, operations will be suspended if conditions deteriorate to the point that operations become unsafe for operators because of factors including, but not limited to, severe cold, significant winds, limited visibility, accumulation of ice, or rapid accumulation of snow. Operations will also be delayed or suspended if existing or anticipated conditions indicate the operations will not be effective.
4. **Work Schedule for Snowplow Operators**: The Town relies on the independent contractor to monitor shift times for snow plow operators which adhere to accepted safety limits. Except in emergencies, it is recommended by the Town that snowplow operators shall not work more than twelve hour shifts and shall not operate equipment for more than ten hours during a shift.

II. TOWN ROADS THAT ARE SNOWPLOWED

Unless closed because of a snow emergency, all town roads are plowed by the Town:

1. **Town Roads Closed in Snow Emergencies**: In snow emergencies the Board will close and barricade roads as it deems necessary to respond to the emergency. The Board will determine when to reopen each road that was closed based on need and condition of the road as well as on the availability of funds, personnel and equipment.

III. TOWN ROAD SNOWPLOWING PRIORITIES

In order to provide for the most efficient and effective snowplowing as possible given the Town's limited resources, the Board must determine which Town roads will be plowed first. To this end and after taking into consideration traffic volume, road function, efficiency and the importance of a road to the welfare of the community, the Board has developed a plowing schedule to be adhered to, except in emergencies as set out by this policy, per ADDENDUM A.

IV. EMERGENCY RESPONSE VEHICLE ASSISTANCE

If law enforcement requests snow removal to assist emergency vehicles to respond to an emergency situation, reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the request.

V. WHEN SNOWPLOWING BEGINS

The following criteria shall be considered when determining when to begin snow and ice control operations:

- An evaluation of the immediate and anticipated weather conditions.
- The likely effectiveness of operations.
- Safety of employees.
- If an unreasonable risk of damaging equipment exists.
- Snow accumulation of 3 (Three) inches or more.
- Sever icy conditions that seriously affect travel.
- Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use of the roads.

Snow and ice control operations are expensive and involve the use of limited resources. Consequently, operations will normally not begin until the snow has stopped falling or until at least 3 (three) inches of snow has accumulated.

VI. WHEN SNOWPLOWING WILL BE DELAYED OR SUSPENDED

As stated in the policy considerations above, snow and ice control operations will be delayed or suspended if the safety of operators is at risk, conditions pose an unreasonable risk of damaging equipment, or if operations will not be effective because of existing or anticipated conditions.

VII. HOW SNOW WILL BE PLOWED

Snow will be plowed in a manner as to minimize traffic obstructions. Snow will normally be plowed from the center of the road first. Then snow will be pushed from left to right until at least the main traveled portion of the road has been cleared. On narrow roads, snow may be plowed from one side to the other. Snow will normally be discharged to the sides of the road unless it is determined that the snow should be hauled to another location for storage.

In the event of equipment failure, extreme snowfall, or other unanticipated events including the availability or need to rest snow plow crews, deviation from these standards may be appropriate.

Snow will be plowed as close as practicable to mailboxes located in the road right-of-way. It shall be the responsibility of property owners to clear snow from around their mailboxes to enable mail delivery.

Snowplowing unavoidably results in snow being deposited on driveways and approaches. Because the Town does not have the resources available to it to clear the ends of driveways and approaches, it is the responsibility of land owners to remove snow from their driveways and approaches.

VIII. SANDING AND SALTING

The Town must consider the cost, environmental impact, public safety, and availability of staff and equipment when deciding if, when, and to what extent to apply sand and/or salt.

Furthermore, the state legislature has imposed the following limitations on the use of salt by road authorities:

“In order to:

(1) minimize the harmful or corrosive effects of salt or other chemicals upon vehicles, roadways, and vegetation;

(2) reduce the pollution of waters; and

(3) reduce the driving hazards resulting from chemicals on windshields;

road authorities, including road authorities of cities, responsible for the maintenance of highways or streets during periods when snow and ice are prevalent, shall utilize such salt or other chemicals only at such places as upon hills, at intersections, or upon high speed or arterial roadways where vehicle traction is particularly critical, and only if, in the opinion of the road authorities, removal of snow and ice or reduction of hazardous conditions by blading, plowing, sanding, including chemicals needed for free flow of sand, or natural elements cannot be accomplished within a reasonable time.” Minn. Stat. § 160.215.

To the extent sand and salt is applied, priority will be given to the following areas in the order listed:

- Hills, controlled intersections, bridges, and curves.
- Major arterial and collector streets.

IX. SNOW STORAGE

Collecting, hauling, and storing snow is expensive, requires special equipment, is labor intensive, and interferes with traffic while it is being performed. As such, snow will only be hauled and stored elsewhere when it is necessary to keep a road reasonably open and passable. If snow is hauled, it will only be stored on public land or on private property with the expressed written permission of the owners. To the extent possible, when snow containing salt is hauled it will be stored away from public waters.

X. SNOWPLOWING OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

The Town will not provide for the snowplowing or sanding of private property except when requested to do so by law enforcement to provide access for emergency vehicles responding to an emergency. If private property is used with permission of the owner to turn around equipment or to store snow, the Town may snowplow the private property as needed to accommodate the Town’s use of the land.

XI. DEPOSITING SNOW IN PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY

It is unlawful for anyone to deposit any snow or ice in a public road right-of-way or to otherwise obstruct a public road. Minn. Stat. §§ 160.27, subd. 5(a)(1); 169.42, subd. 1. Depositing snow or ice in a road also increases snowplowing costs, creates a potential public safety hazard, and could damage equipment.

XII. OBJECTS WITHIN TOWN ROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAY (ROW)

Public road rights-of-way are used for a variety of purposes that are outside of the direct control of the Town. Because snow and ice control operations are performed by independent contractors, the Town shall not be responsible for damages caused by the contractor to lawn sprinklers, utility structures, sod, landscaping materials, vegetation, or other personal or real property. Items placed in the road ROW are done so at the owner’s risk.

All mailboxes placed within the ROW are also placed there at the owner's risk. Mailboxes and mailbox supports close to the road makes the plowing operations difficult and renders the boxes susceptible to damage as the result of such activity. The Township's contractors try to use care and consideration plowing in their vicinity. Despite this care and consideration, some mailboxes will be knocked down or destroyed during snow plowing. The Township believes that most damage would be eliminated if postal patrons would use a swing away mailbox support per addendum B. If a properly place mailbox support conforming to the diagram in addendum B is damaged during snow plowing the Township will replace the support (the mailbox is the responsibility of the owner). Other non-conforming mailbox supports are not eligible for repair or replacement.

It is the responsibility of owners to keep the road rights-of-way clear of vehicles, trailers, trash cans, and other items of personal property in order to facilitate the proper snow and ice control operations. If an owner fails to keep the road clear of personal property, the owner becomes responsible for promptly clearing the snow left in the right-of-way around the item. If the Board determines personal property left in the road right-of-way poses an unreasonable risk to public safety, or significantly interferes with snowplowing operations, it will have the item removed from the right-of-way at the owner's expense. While reasonable efforts will be made to avoid damaging private property, snow and ice control operations may result in damage to the property of others. Where private property damage does occur, it is the policy of the Town to handle damages in the following manner.

XIII. COMPLAINTS AND REQUESTS FOR FURTHER SERVICES

Complaints and requests for further services regarding snow and ice control or damage will be taken during normal working hours and handled in accordance with Town procedures. Complaints and requests for further services should be directed to the Board. If the contractor is aware of complaints or requests for additional services, it shall forward such complaints or requests to the Board for consideration.

XIV. REVIEW OF POLICY

The Board will periodically review this policy, taking into consideration any changing conditions in the Town's circumstances, any complaints or comments received, and the experienced learned from undertaking snow and ice control procedures.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20____.

BY THE TOWN BOARD

ATTEST:

Town Board Chair

Town Clerk

Resolution 13-04 Addendum A

Addendum A

Town Road Snow Plowing Priorities

The Township designated the following roads higher traffic and prefers these roads to be cleared first. However, the Township understands that situation may dictate changes to this policy and such changes are left to the contractor and/or the supervisor in charge of road maintenance.

Sunset Strip from County Road 61 to 74th Avenue then to County 34, Lake Ida Way, Betsy Ross Road and Pleasant Grove north of County Road 22. Then continuing with the rest of the roads in the most efficient way possible.

Addendum B

