

# GRANT VALLEY TOWNSHIP

## SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL POLICY

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD ON NOVEMBER 12, 2020

*(UPDATED MARCH, 2026)*

The removal of snow and ice from the Township's roadways is one of the most important jobs confronting the Township during the winter months. The safety and comfort of the public shall always be the primary consideration of all Township roadway personnel. Snow and ice removal operations must be conducted in such a manner to provide the safest, most economical means of opening Township roads within a reasonable amount of time after each winter storm event. The following policy has been established to provide guidelines for the public and for plow operators to follow to ensure consistent practices for snow and ice removal during the winter storm months.

Grant Valley Township does not assure a completely bare road. Entire sections of roadway are not usually salted or sanded. Users of the roads are reminded to exercise caution and drive with care. The legal speed limit may not be possible at all times.

### **Dispatching of snowplows:**

1. The township will not dispatch plows until after the snowfall and/or wind has stopped. EXCEPT:
  - a. In an emergency or other special circumstances; or
  - b. When conditions allow reasonable accomplishments to be made
2. The township will perform snow removal on bituminous surfaced roads when we receive appreciable accumulations, generally 1 to 2 inches. 1 inch of heavy snow or 2 inches of light snow will be used as a rule of thumb.
3. The township will perform snow removal on gravel roads when accumulations exceed 3 inches. Gravel roads will not be plowed in early season until snowpack has happened.
4. The township will perform ice control measures when icy conditions seriously affect travel.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION:**

The township is staffed for one shift of snow and ice removal. In a snow event, the necessary road personnel and equipment will be mobilized by the Township Road Supervisor. Any deviation from the start time must be approved by the Road Supervisor.

The normal weekday early start time during a snow event is between 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Weekends and holidays will receive a reduced level of service, due to lower traffic volumes and the limited resources available.

Operator duty shifts are generally limited to a maximum of 12 hours per day for safety reasons. Therefore, most routes will not have coverage between 5:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. the next morning.

Operators will be halted when:

1. Service levels are reached.
2. Coverage time has elapsed.
3. Conditions are too hazardous.
4. Reasonable accomplishments cannot be made.

## **OPERATIONS:**

Generally, the following three phases will be used in snow removal operations. Depending on the situation more than one phase may be accomplished at one time.

1. Make the roads passable. Clean one lane in each direction.
2. Widen the lanes to the edge of shoulders and apply an abrasive/chemical mixture. The township will perform sanding operations at problem areas including curves, hills, intersections, and bridges
3. A blend of 8-10% salt to sand is generally used in sanding operations. This is modified as the temperature and/or conditions warrant. Salt use will be limited at temperatures below +20 degrees as the salt becomes ineffective below +20 degrees.
4. Remove ice and slush off the roadway after salt and sun have been allowed to work.

## **PLOWING PRIORITIES:**

It is the goal of the Township to serve most of the public in the quickest way possible. Roads with higher traffic volumes will typically receive higher priority.

The following are the priorities plow operators will strive to adhere to:

1. Township bituminous surfaced roads.
2. Township gravel surfaced roads starting at the North end of the township working South.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY:**

Mailboxes, fences, and other items damaged during snow and ice removal are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, by the Road Supervisor. Only those items that were damaged by actual contact with road equipment will be repaired at the road maintenance contractor's expense. The township does not provide special mailbox installations or decorative designs. The township is not liable for damages to fences, vehicles, and/or other objects placed on any township right of way.

## **GARBAGE CANS:**

When garbage cans are placed in the road-right-of way, the township and plow operators are not responsible for damage to garbage cans or disbursements of their contents. Plow operators will not go around garbage cans left in these areas. Residents must keep garbage cans off the road and out of the right-of-way to avoid damage and ensure proper snow removal.

## **RESIDENTIAL PLOWING:**

Township residents are reminded that it is unlawful under Minnesota Statutes 160.2715 to plow snow from driveways onto or across township roads. Piles of snow left on or near the road can freeze into a solid mass or cause drifting, creating a hazardous situation for vehicles and snowplows. Accidents and damages caused by snow piles placed in the roadway may result in liability to the property owner.

## **STRANDED MOTORISTS:**

Plow operators may assist stranded motorists by contacting local law enforcement and/or emergency personnel. Plow operators will not attempt to remove a stuck vehicle.

**EMERGENCIES:**

If emergency services agencies request snow removal to assist response to an emergency situation, reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the request.

**NO TRAVEL ADVISORY:**

No travel advisories issued by the State Patrol and/or Sheriff's Office apply to all township snow and ice removal crews. When a no travel advisory is issued, local media is contacted and all plows are pulled from their respective routes.

**INFORMATION:**

Questions or concerns regarding snow removal should be directed to the Grant Valley Township Road Supervisor.

**SUMMARY:**

This policy was developed to provide general guidelines for both township personnel and the traveling public. This policy intends to cover most situations normally encountered in winter storm events. Each decision to mobilize the snowplow crew is a judgment call based on the particular weather conditions combined with past experience along with the resources available at the time and, therefore, may not adhere strictly to this general policy.