

Jefferson County
Road & Bridge Division
Snow Removal Procedures
Revised 7/30/2010

Mission Statement

To provide for the safety of the traveling public through the efficient use of manpower and equipment. To remove accumulated snow, provide traction materials where required on ice-covered roads, and maintain access to the roadway system for the traveling public. To provide this service throughout the County within acceptable parameters of budget and resource allocation.

Overview

The Road & Bridge Division is currently responsible for snow removal on 2,800 lane miles of paved roads and 700 lane miles of gravel roads in the unincorporated areas of the County. One lane mile is a 10 foot wide section of road one mile long. State highways, private roads and newly constructed roads that have not been accepted by formal resolution of the Board of County Commissioners are not included.

Forecasting and Preparations

The Road and Bridge Division is on a twenty-four hour, early-warning alert system. Supervisors utilize local, national, and customized weather forecasts and databases in order to anticipate and be prepared for the intensity of storm forecasted. Equipment is made ready for sanding and plowing during normal working hours for a forecasted storm.

Each equipment operator is assigned a specific route for snow removal and sanding. Assignment of roads to a route is determined by area supervisors based on priority of the road as defined below and for the most efficient utilization of equipment.

Snow Removal Procedures

Plowing and sanding operations will take place in four phases during a storm. The order in which streets are plowed in each phase is based on the following definitions of priority:

Priority 1 - Main arterial streets that provide for high traffic volumes.

Priority 2 - Major subdivision collectors, school zones and school bus routes.

Priority 3 - Residential or other local roads that carry moderate to low traffic volumes.

Priority 4 - Cul-de-sacs or other dead-end roads carrying very low traffic volumes.

Phase I: Initial opening of all Priority 1 through 3 streets in that order. Severity of the storm may delay response time for Priority 3 streets due to the fact that initial opening of major arterial streets requires that multiple lanes be plowed in each direction.

Phase II: Plowing and sanding of problem roads having steep inclines, curves, bridges or overpasses. Widening of any Priority 1 through 3 streets deemed necessary. Repeat plowing of all streets initially opened as snow continues to accumulate.

Phase III: Removal of packed snow and ice on all Priority 1 through 3 streets where possible and deemed necessary as snowfall accumulation stops. Plowing and sanding operations on Priority 4 streets will take

place as resource availability allows. It could be several days after the snowstorm has ended before Priority 4 streets are initially plowed. Intermittent sanding as necessary by road priority.

Phase IV: Storm event is over. Continuation of widening operations to improve safe travel and prepare for additional accumulation during subsequent storms.

Application of Traction Materials: Sanding of most roads is limited during heavy snowfall because the sand is quickly covered and then removed as additional plowing occurs. When applying sand, special attention is given to sections of the road network posing specific safety concerns. These include, but are not limited to, areas such as: school and hospital zones, police and fire stations, bridges and overpasses, turn lanes, acceleration or deceleration lanes, approaches to intersections that are stop sign or signal controlled, curves, steep grades, heavy traffic areas, areas of ice accumulation, speed bumps, and areas with other known problems.

Snow Removal Clarifications

Driveways: Driveway approaches affected during Phases I, II, and III are the responsibility of the property owner or resident to clear. When snow removal or widening in Phase IV is being carried out, driveways that were previously opened by the homeowner will not have additional snow plowed into them.

Mailboxes and Fences: Mailboxes, newspaper delivery boxes or fences installed alongside the traveled roadway are at the risk of the owner. If an operator strikes a mailbox or fence with a plow, the operator will report it and we will repair it as soon as possible. Mailboxes and fences damaged by snow load during normal plowing operations are not the responsibility of the County. If a mailbox is struck by a plow, it will be replaced with a standard rural mailbox. Postal regulations require residents to clear snow in front of mailboxes to allow for mail delivery.

Snow Pushed onto County Street or Right-of Way: The practice of pushing or throwing snow onto or across Jefferson County streets endangers the traveling public as well as county snowplow operators. Jefferson County residents as well as private contractors may receive a warning and/or summons for snow pushed onto County streets and rights-of-way from sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, etc.

Vehicles Parked or Abandoned: Streets on which vehicles have been abandoned or otherwise parked so as to restrict the safe and continuous operation of snow removal equipment may not be plowed until those vehicles are removed.

Requests for Emergency Snow Removal: All requests for emergency snowplowing should go to the Jefferson County Sheriff's Dept. If the request is valid, they will notify the Road & Bridge Division and we will respond as soon as possible.