

Department of Public Works
City of Lewiston
PO Box 479
103 Adams Ave
Lewiston, Me 04243-0479

Winter Storms

**An Important Message about
Winter Storm Operations:
Snow Plowing
Road Sanding and Salting
Snow Removal
From the Lewiston Department
of Public Works**

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DEAR RESIDENT

During the winter months, the Department of Public Works prides itself on providing safe and effective driving conditions for all of Lewiston's citizens.

An effective transportation system is key to economic development and citizens have come to expect clear roads for them to use. Additionally, snow and ice control is a Public Safety concern as police, fire and ambulances need to be able to reach places where their services are urgently needed. The Department treats snow and ice storms as emergency conditions.

The following information is designed to enhance your knowledge and understanding of winter conditions and procedures. Winter can be trying for motorists, thus, it is important to know how snow plowing and removal will be carried out.

I hope you will find the following information helpful and informative. Please drive carefully.

Sincerely,

*David A. Jones
Director*

WHEN THE SNOWFALL STARTS

An important step in dealing with snowfall is sanding/salting of streets. Top priority is given to the City's main routes. These routes are streets that the City has found to have the heaviest year-round traffic and usually are major arterials such as Main St., Sabattus St., Lisbon St., and East Ave. Along with the major arterials which receive top priority, are the areas which cross or are adjacent to bodies of water and areas where large hills are located. Examples are all bridges over the Androscoggin River and the Canal and areas such as Lincoln St. and No Name Pond Rd.

The application of sand/salt begins when frozen precipitation begins to fall. All operations begin by sanding/salting the streets and continue until all the streets are clear, or until it is no longer effective due to the depth of snow. Salt keeps the snow from bonding to the pavement and allows for cleaner plowing. An average of 200 tons of salt is used for each plowable storm in Lewiston.

WHEN THE SNOWFALL CONTINUES

When two to three inches of snow have accumulated and more is expected, snow is more economically removed by plowing rather than sanding/salting. All public roads, main arterials, as well as residential streets, may be plowed by Public Work's personnel. Our first responsibility is to open the main arterials and other heavily traveled areas. The arterials are key to maintaining a steady flow of traffic.

The units assigned to plow main arterials are the first to be called. Each storm is different and presents a challenge that can be very difficult to

handle. Such things as temperature, time of day, traffic conditions, rate of snowfall and texture of snow are just a few factors affecting the impact of a storm in Lewiston. The amount of snowfall alone can be deceptive. For instance, a small storm during a weekday rush hour can cause major problems, while an equivalent storm on the weekend or late at night may cause little trouble. Light snow and heavy winds will cause continual drifting and ice build-up. Heavy wet snow will bring down trees and wires and cause additional equipment strain. Snow turning to rain will cause low areas to flood requiring immediate attention to eliminate further problems. Trained crews take pride in clearing the City's streets and are dedicated to performing in a professional manner. Once a storm has ended, it takes approximately six to eight hours to complete the snow plowing of Lewiston's 191 miles of road.

SNOW REMOVAL

Snow removal is the act of physically removing the accumulated snow which has been plowed to the edge of the roadway and disposing of it in a designated snow dump site. Snow removal is performed in hazardous areas first. "Little Canada," lower Lisbon St. (from Adams Ave to Main St.) and Main Street from Longley Bridge to Central Maine Medical Center are first to be addressed. All streets which are equipped with parking meters are next to be cleared. From there, the crews work their way throughout the heart of the City and may skip over to more congested areas. This service is performed in downtown areas during late evening and early morning hours when parking is not permitted and traffic is at its lowest point. Other areas are done during the day. During the course of the winter, it may become necessary to divide the work force

into two shifts and perform this service both day and night. This type of scheduling adds additional strain to personnel as well as to the equipment, but is necessary to provide safe and efficient conditions.

OTHER WINTER STORM SERVICES

Other services which are performed by the Lewiston Public Works Department are:

- Sidewalk plowing (designated areas only)
- Sidewalk sanding
- Sand boxes located throughout the City for the convince of residents that are filled with a sand/salt mixture
- The top of catch basins are cleared
- Crews shovel public walkways, bus stops and bridges
- Snow is plowed and removed from publicly owned building such as all public schools, the public library, City Hall, parking garages, the police station and all fire stations.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON WINTER STORM OPERATIONS

During a storm, the crews plow only travel lanes in order to provide mobility to as many areas in the least amount of time. The crews will return and widen streets at the storm's end.

Snowplow truck traveling with their plows up does not mean they are failing to perform their duties. They may be headed for a designated plowing area or enroute for fuel or repair.

During snow plowing, Public Works' personnel do not have a shift change. If a storm is of long duration, the crews continue to perform their

services around the clock until the job is completed.

Each plowable storm is assigned 51 trained employees, 34 pieces of snow plowing or sanding equipment and 5 pieces of snow blowing equipment rented from area contractors.

The Public Works Department realizes that it is an inconvenience on the public's part to have driveway openings and walkways obstructed with snow repeatedly during a storm; however, it is necessary to enable safe conditions for all motorists and pedestrians. The length of a storm and amount of snow dictates the number of times a piece of equipment will make a pass down a street. At minimum, two passes are made in each direction. The length and amount of snow dictates the maximum number of passes that are necessary. It could take as many as five or six passes.

Our goal is to remove snow and ice from the roadway as rapidly and efficiently as possible to enable mobility and safe driving conditions.

YOU CAN HELP

Here are some ways that you as a resident can help to make a winter storm even easier on both yourself and on the Public Works Crews:

- Make sure that your vehicle is ready for winter driving conditions; good snow or all season tires, new wiper blades, a good battery, added weight in the trunk and a good ice scrapper and brush will add to your safety.
- Reduce your speed in snow and ice conditions. Learn to drive for the conditions of the road, even 4x4's have difficulty stopping on ice.

- Bridges and areas adjacent to bodies of water will ice over causing black ice. Always take caution when traveling in these areas.
- Do not drive in winter storms unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Leave adequate distance, at least 200 feet, whenever following snow removal equipment.
- When a storm is imminent, please remove vehicles from roadsides. Do not wait until the 1:00 A.M. curfew.
- Shoveling or plowing snow from driveways into the roadway is not only illegal; it can be a serious traffic hazard and hinder snow removal operations.
- Be patient, it takes time to clear 191 miles of roadway. The crews have been trained to provide services as quickly as possible.
- During a storm, please remember that it is important for the Department to keep telephone lines clear for emergency communications. General information phone calls are welcome at any other time.
- Make arrangements to have adequate food supplies prior to a storm.
- Remove snow from the sidewalk in front of your property, as required by section 66-12 of the City Code. Also shovel around fire hydrants, so they can be located in case of an emergency.
- Finally, we recommend parents not allow children to play near the street until well after the storm is over and plowing operations are complete.