

# **TOWN OF SUNAPEE**

## **Winter Road Maintenance Policy**

This Winter Road Maintenance Policy (Policy) is intended to be used as a reference that the Highway Department will follow to maintain the Town of Sunapee's (Town) system of roads, sidewalks and parking areas during winter storm events. This Policy shall not be construed as a bare and/or dry pavement, or black roads policy. The guidelines provided in this Policy may be modified by the Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, as necessary to address the many variables that may be experienced during a winter storm event, and for the purpose of meeting the objectives and level of service that are endeavored to be provided by the Town.

**GENERAL POLICY:** Winter weather systems that pass through the Town of Sunapee (Town) are often very complex as a result of the changes in elevation and topography that the Town has between its borders. There are numerous variables that determine the Highway Department's approach and methods for winter maintenance operations including the type(s) and rate(s) of precipitation that are experienced during each storm event, surface temperatures of pavement and gravel roads, physical roadway conditions, ambient air temperature(s), time of the day or night that storm events occur, and the day(s) of the week that storm events occur. It shall be the intent of the Town to provide timely, cost effective and environmentally responsible winter roadway maintenance operations for the safety of the Town's residents and other vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

**LEVEL OF SERVICE:** The goal of the Town is to provide reasonably safe traveling conditions for vehicles, equipment and pedestrians on Town-owned roads, sidewalks and parking areas. Reasonably safe traveling conditions is not meant to imply that the roads will be completely free of snow, ice, slush or a combination of the three. It shall be the responsibility of motorists and/or pedestrians to operate vehicles or equipment, or to travel on Town-owned property in a manner that is safe for the conditions that are present during winter storm events.

The Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, will perform roadway inspections during and after winter storm events in accordance with the Highway Department's On-call Policy. The Highway Department uses the following storm types and/or observable roadway surface conditions as the basis to help determine when winter road maintenance is required:

- Freezing Rain – Immediate response during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM). Response shall be approximately 20-minutes (arrival at highway garage) after notification by Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, during non-business hours.
- Black Ice – Immediate response during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM). Response shall be approximately 20-minutes (arrival at highway garage) after notification by Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, during non-business hours.
- Ice Storm – Immediate response during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM). Response shall be approximately 20-minutes (arrival at highway garage) after notification by Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, during non-business hours.
- 4-inches of snow – Immediate response during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM). Response shall be approximately 20-minutes (arrival at

highway garage) after notification by Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, during non-business hours.

- 3-inches of snow and storm forecasted to intensify - Immediate response during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM). Response shall be approximately 20-minutes (arrival at highway garage) after notification by Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, during non-business hours.
- Downed trees or limbs (not involving any utility wires or utility poles) - Immediate response during normal Highway Garage business hours for the Highway Garage (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM). Response shall be approximately 20-minutes (arrival at highway garage) after notification by Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, during non-business hours.
- Spotty Icing Conditions – Immediate response during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM). Response may be delayed during non-business hours and shall be determined by the Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, based on observed icing conditions.
- Light Snow - Response may be delayed during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM) depending on the observed roadway conditions. Response may be delayed during non-business hours, and shall be determined by the Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, based on observed roadway conditions.
- Blowing Snow - Response may be delayed during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM) depending on the observed roadway conditions. Response may be delayed during non-business hours, and shall be determined by the Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, based on observed roadway conditions.
- 3-inches of snow or less, and storm is forecasted to end or has ended - Response may be delayed during normal Highway Garage business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:00AM – 3:30PM) depending on the observed roadway conditions. Response may be delayed during non-business hours, and shall be determined by the Highway Director or his designee, the Highway Foreman, based on observed roadway conditions.

The following notification times and actual start times (trucks and/or equipment have been loaded and have begun roadway maintenance procedures) for highway department employees will be used as a basis for roadway maintenance procedures for the above listed storm types:

- School Days – Employee notification shall occur between 3:00AM and 3:30AM. Start time shall be at approximately 4:00AM.
- Non-School Weekdays - Employee notification shall occur between 3:30AM and 4:00AM. Start time shall be at approximately 5:00AM.
- Saturdays - Employee notification shall occur between 4:30AM and 5:00AM. Start time shall be at approximately 6:00AM.
- Sundays & Holidays - Employee notification shall occur between 5:30AM and 6:00AM. Start time shall be at approximately 7:00AM.

The times may be modified by the Highway Director or his designee as necessary to address specific winter roadway maintenance needs.

**EQUIPMENT, LABOR & MATERIALS:** As of 10/19/15, the Highway Department has three heavy duty six-wheel dump trucks and one spare six-wheel dump truck, two medium duty six-wheel dump trucks, one 1-ton dump truck, a heavy duty loader with a box plow, and a light duty sidewalk plow/snow blower that are used to conduct roadway, sidewalk and parking lot maintenance for all winter storm

events. The Highway Department has seven full-time personnel that perform winter roadway maintenance, and two full-time staff members that perform buildings and grounds, sidewalk and parking lot, winter maintenance. The equipment and labor force currently within the Highway Department is subject to change without notice. The Highway Department is also responsible for winter maintenance of all of the Sunapee School District's parking lots. All personnel have received training in the appropriate methods and application rates of the aforementioned winter maintenance materials for specific storm event types.

The Highway Department uses rock salt (sodium chloride), sand (abrasive), or a combination thereof to assist with the winter maintenance of all paved surfaces, and uses sand and 3/8" chip stone (abrasive and traction) to assist with the winter maintenance of all gravel road and gravel parking surfaces. The frequency and quantity at which the aforementioned materials are applied during a winter storm event and their effectiveness are in general a function of surface and ambient air temperatures, storm type, surface types, and roadway, sidewalk and parking lot physical conditions.

The application of rock salt in general is applied to paved surfaces for the purpose of breaking the bond that precipitation forms with paved surfaces during winter storm events. Rock salt is typically applied at the inception of, during, or on completion of winter storm events and when the ambient air temperature is 20° Fahrenheit or more, and when the temperature is expected to rise. Rock salt becomes less effective when temperatures drop below 20° Fahrenheit, and is not effective below temperatures of 10° Fahrenheit. A combination of rock salt and sand (the exact mixture will vary) will typically be applied at the inception of and/or during winter storm events when there is an ambient air temperature between 10° and 20° Fahrenheit, when the temperature is expected to stay between 10° and 20° Fahrenheit or when it is expected to rise. Sand will typically be applied at the inception of and/or during winter storm events when there is an ambient air temperature of 10° Fahrenheit or less, and when the temperature is expected to decrease. Sand, 3/8" chip stone or a combination thereof will be applied to gravel road and gravel parking lot surfaces at the inception of, during, or on completion of winter storm events. The Highway Director or his designee will determine the material(s) to be applied prior to each storm event, the duration by which materials will be applied through the cleanup of each storm event, and may modify the materials that are applied during a storm event due to changing storm, temperatures, and paved and gravel surface conditions.

**WINTER MAINTENANCE PRIORITIES:** There are approximately 53.5 miles of roadways, 21 parking lots and approximately 1.25 miles of sidewalks that the Highway Department maintains in the Town of Sunapee. The 53.5 miles of roadway is divided into five main plow routes which average 6.75 miles (within the village of Sunapee & Georges Mills) to 11.75 miles (four out-of-Town country plow routes). Of the four out-of-Town plow routes, approximately ¼ of each route is gravel roads. In general, the following are the service priorities during winter storm events:

1. School bus routes and school parking lots will be given the first priority during school days.
2. Paved roads and parking lots will be maintained prior to gravel roads and gravel parking lots.
3. Through-roads will be maintained before dead-end roads.
4. Class V roads will be maintained before emergency lanes.

Each plow route from start to finish requires approximately 2.5 – 3.5 hours depending on the type of storm event, storm intensity, and roadway conditions encountered during each storm event. The Highway Department is not responsible for plowing state-owned roads, private roads or class VI roads that are located in the Town.

**ITEMS WITHIN THE TOWN'S RIGHT-OF-WAY:** The Town shall not be responsible for damage to private property items including but not limited to planters, stone walls, hedges, mailboxes or any landscape plantings that are placed within the Town's right-of-way per RSA 236:15. The Town is not responsible for damage to private property including but not limited to vehicles, equipment and mailboxes that are within the Town's right-of-way, and that is the result of sand, grit, stones, pieces of pavement, snow or slush that are cast from the Highway Department's vehicles or equipment within the Town's right-of-way.

The Town's right-of-way often extends beyond the surface of the roads. Right-of-way widths can be obtained from the Highway Department and/or the Planning Department if necessary.

The Town is responsible to repair or replace damage to private property that is located outside the Town's right-of-way, and that comes in direct contact with winter maintenance vehicles or equipment.

**ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS:** All roads or partial sections of roads that are adjacent to and/or that travel around the lakes that are within the Town of Sunapee including Lake Sunapee, Otter Pond, Ledge Pond, Perkins Pond and Mountain View Lake will be treated as Reduced Salt Zones on paved roads, and Reduced Sand zones on gravel roads during winter maintenance operations.

**WINTER MAINTENANCE CLEANUP:** The Highway Director or his designee will determine an appropriate schedule for conducting winter maintenance cleanup procedure. In general, snow removal operations will be performed by the Highway Department with assistance from other Town departments or private contractor's as conditions warrant. Snow removal will be performed with similar priorities given to those that are listed under Winter Maintenance Priorities. Snow will be removed using the same equipment that is used to perform winter maintenance. Snow will be dumped at the Highway Garage upon removal from all locations.