City of Rhinelander Snow and Ice Policy

General: The ability to react promptly and decisively to varying winter weather conditions with regard to snow removal and ice control on city streets and sidewalks is recognized to be an important and necessary function of government for the safety and well-being of its citizens and visitors. It is therefore deemed to be prudent that standard policies and procedures be endorsed as to the desirable level of snow removal and ice control service to be provided in the City of Rhinelander.

Policy: Because of environmental and economical concern, it is not the City’s intent to provide “bare pavement” driving conditions at all times and at all locations during the winter season. Citywide application of highway salt will not generally be done except in the case of ice storm or similar extreme condition. Any salt application will be held to a minimum, as determined by the Street Superintendent. Although hazardous areas such as hills, curves, railroad crossings, controlled intersections and arterial streets will be given priority attention to minimize slippery road conditions, it is the responsibility of motor vehicle operators to use care and common sense while driving on city streets when snow or ice conditions exist.

Procedure: 1. Street Superintendent or his designate will monitor street conditions during normal working hours. During non-working hours the Police Department will monitor changing weather conditions and will promptly notify the Superintendent or his designate of snow accumulation or slippery streets. Depending on the severity of the situation an appropriate number of trucks will be dispatched to begin plowing and/or spreading of sand or salt sand.

2. As a general rule, two (2) inches or more of snow will be plowed.

3. Areas will be plowed in the following order of priority:
   #1 “Highways” and emergency entrance to hospital
   #2 Arterials and connector streets
   #3 Residential
   #4 Parking lots, parks and cemetery

   The Street Superintendent will use his best judgment to determine deviations from this priority list, other priorities and problem areas are on an as needed basis to respond to specific safety and emergency situations.

4. Snow plowing procedures in the downtown business district will vary, depending on the amount of snow accumulations:
a. After a heavy snowfall, snow removal will usually be done in two phases: 1) snow will be plowed near the curb 2) the snowbanks will be loaded onto trucks with a snow blower and hauled out of the downtown area the next regular working day.

b. Residents must understand that certain areas of town require snow removal during off peak hours. Although, we try to keep it to a minimum, there will be times in which we will be near residential areas in the early morning hours. Areas of heavy traffic and parking concentration typically have snow removed between the hours of 3:00 and 6:00am.

c. A light snowfall will usually be plowed to the curb unless air temperatures are such that melting is occurring or is anticipated to occur. In this case, highway salt may be applied to accelerate the melting process. Successive plowing of light snowfalls may result in sufficient accumulation next to the curb to warrant removal. In this case, the snow will be hauled away in the same manner as with a heavy snowfall.

d. Only City of Rhinelander trucks will be used to haul snow from the downtown area unless the Street Superintendent determines that the amount of snow or inadequacy of equipment is such that independent truckers are necessary to accomplish the task within reasonable time.

5. It is impossible to prevent snow from being pushed into driveways when the streets are plowed. In order to minimize this inconvenience to homeowners after a snowfall, it is intended that city crews complete the plowing of a given area within a relatively short period of time, rather than make periodic passes with the plow and each time deposit additional snow in driveways unless this procedure is required to keep the roads open.

6. In order to avoid damage to curbside mailboxes, snowplow trucks must necessarily keep a safe distance away. It is expected that property owners will have to do some snow removal to provide easy access to the mailbox by letter carriers. Mailboxes accidentally damaged by a snowplow will be reported to the City Clerk for processing as a damage claim. The Public Works Department will repair damage to lawns from city snowplows, which go over the curb. If no curb is present, the Public Works Department will not be responsible for repair to damaged lawns.
7. Snow plowing is most efficient and safe when the streets are clear of obstructions such as parked vehicles. City Traffic Code prohibits overnight parking from December 1 to April 1, and the Chief of Police is responsible for assuring compliance with this ordinance.

8. In the event of a major snowstorm or other weather condition causing a severe public hazard or impairing movement of public safety, medical or other essential service vehicles, a SNOW EMERGENCY shall be deemed to exist for a period of 48 hours or until the streets have been made reasonably safe for public travel. The Mayor shall give notice of a snow emergency over area radio stations and the local cable TV channel. Parking restrictions and towing of illegally parked cars will be in accordance with the Traffic Code.

9. Snow removal from problem area sidewalks is the responsibility of the abutting property owner or occupant. Snow and ice remaining on sidewalks and posing a hazard to the public shall be reported to the Inspection Department for enforcement of the ordinance. In the case of corner lots, the abutting property owner will be required to remove all snow from the sidewalk for light snow events. Where city plows deposit snow on sidewalks adjacent to a curb, the abutting owner is responsible to remove snow to create a path for pedestrian travel. Where city plows cause excessive buildup of snow at intersection corners, the plowed snow will be removed by the Public Work Department after all other higher priority snow removal are completed after a storm event. The priority of corner snow removal will follow the same priority as listed under item 3, by area as time permits.

10. Snow plowed or thrown on city streets from private driveways and parking lots are in violation of city ordinance. Violators will be reported to the Police Department for enforcement of the ordinance.

Winter Parking Ban:
From December 1 to April 1 no person shall park any motor vehicle on any other street or unmetered public parking lot between 3:00 a.m. - 6:00 a.m. At all other times during such dates, all motor vehicles shall be parked only as follows:

a. Commencing at 6:00 a.m. of an even numbered date to 3:00 a.m. of the subsequent date, all vehicles may park only on the side of the street corresponding with even numbered addresses.

b. Commencing at 6:00 a.m. of an odd numbered date to 3:00 a.m. of the subsequent date, all vehicles may park only on the side of the street corresponding with odd numbered addresses. The Police Department
may remove any illegally parked vehicle to a public garage or proper parking place and may charge the cost thereof to the owner of the vehicle.

c. The following streets are exempt from the even-odd parking requirements.
   1. Baird Ave., from Court Park to Dahl St.
   2. Court Park, from Oneida Ave. to Baird Ave.
   3. Oneida Ave., from Court Park to Dahl St.
   4. Dahl St., from Oneida Ave. to Baird Ave.
   5. Brown St. from Frederick St. to Anderson St.
   6. Stevens St. from Frederick St. to Anderson St.
   7. Rives St. from Anderson St. to Pelham St.
   8. Davenport St. from Anderson St. to Oneida Av.
   9. King St. from Brown St. to Stevens St.
  10. Anderson St. from Brown St. to Stevens St.
  11. Pelham St. from Rives St. to King St.

Winter snow tips:

1. Before shoveling the last 4 or 5 feet of your driveway, wait until the street is plowed. Always shovel the end of your driveway so the snowplow can take it down the street and not push it back into your driveway. On most roads, plows push snow back 3 or 4 times before the plow trucks have reached the curb line.
2. If the weather is calling for snow turning to freezing rain, try to wait and shovel your driveway after the freezing rain stops. This will help in keeping your driveway from turning to all ice.
3. Please do not plant trees/shrubs or place other items within the city right-of-way. They could be damaged or damage our equipment.
4. Please remember that it is not uncommon to see a sand truck or snow plow go by your house many times during a storm. Plows going to the outlying routes have to get there somehow. The storm will dictate how many times we sand or plow a street.
5. Please pay attention when driving on snow or ice covered roads. Do not pass a plow or sander and keep back a safe distance. Remember that the plow or sander is there to make the roads safe.
6. If possible, please shovel the fire hydrant near your home as well as any surface drains.
7. When plowing or snow blowing your driveway, please do not put the snow into or across the road. It’s against the City Ordinance to do so and secondly, if we don’t get a chance to come back and plow it off, it will most likely freeze and cause ice ruts, making driving dangerous.
Municipal Code

8.05 SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL.

(1) (a) The owner or lessee of every lot or parcel of land in the City fronting or abutting upon a sidewalk shall clear the sidewalk in front of or abutting upon said premises, as the case may be, of snow, by 12:00 noon of each day and cause the same to be kept clear of snow and ice.

(b) No person shall place, push or move snow from private property onto any sidewalk, alley or street in the City, except that snow removed from a sidewalk or driveway approach may be deposited on the boulevard, or where no boulevard exists, snow may be deposited at the curb line. No person may place snow in such an area that would obstruct the view of vehicular traffic at an intersection or place snow in such a manner that would hinder pedestrians in any way. (Am. #9-98)

(c) The deposit of any snow or ice upon any sidewalk, alley or street of the City contrary to the provisions of this Chapter shall be and is declared to be a nuisance, and in addition to the penalty provided for violation of this section, the City may summarily remove any snow so deposited and cause the cost of said removal to be charged to the owner of the property from which said snow or ice has been removed.

(d) The Director of Public Works is hereby authorized, at the request of any person desiring to have snow removed from his or its premises, to remove said snow with City equipment and the actual cost of said removal shall be paid by such person requesting such snow or ice to be removed, promptly upon presentation of a statement from the Director of the cost of such removal. If said charge is not paid upon presentation of the statement, the same shall be collected as an ordinary debt to the City or placed in the tax roll and be collected in the same manner as ordinary taxes against said property. The Director of Public Works shall not be obliged to remove snow or ice at the request of any owner or property, but may do so, only in case that the City equipment required for the removal of such snow or ice, is not required by the Street Department for use upon City streets or in work pertaining to the City.