

**SNOW REMOVAL POLICY  
CITY OF UNDERWOOD**

**1. Introduction**

The City of Underwood believes it is in the best interest of the residents for the city to assume basic responsibility for control of snow and ice on city streets. Reasonable ice and snow control is necessary for routine travel and emergency services. The city will provide such control in a safe and cost effective manner, keeping in mind safety, budget, personnel, and environmental concerns. The city will use city employees and equipment to provide this service. Only in extreme situations will the city contract with outside services for assistance. Fire and medical emergencies will take precedence over all snow removal operation and schedules.

**2. Scheduling**

A. The City Maintenance Supervisor will decide when to begin snow or ice control operations. Some of the criteria for that decision are:

- i. Snow accumulation of 3 inches or more;
- ii. Drifting of snow that causes problems for travel;
- iii. Icy conditions which seriously affect travel; and
- iv. Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use of streets.

Snow and ice control operations are expensive and involve the use of limited personnel and equipment. Consequently, snowplowing operations will not generally be conducted for snowfall of less than 3 inches.

B. Snow plow operators will be expected to work eight-hour shifts. In severe snow emergencies, operators sometimes have to work in excess of eight-hour shifts. However, because of budget and safety concerns, no operator shall work more than a twelve-hour shift in any twenty-four hour period. Operators will take a fifteen-minute break every two hours with a half-hour meal break after four hours. After a twelve-hour day, the operators will be replaced if additional qualified personnel are available.

**3. How snow will be plowed**

**Section A.** Snow will be plowed in a manner so as to minimize any traffic obstructions. The center of the roadway will be plowed first. The snow shall then be pushed from left to right. The discharge shall go onto the boulevard area of the street. Snow on cul-de-sacs will normally be plowed to the center in an attempt to provide the largest turning radius possible for emergency vehicle ingress and egress. Narrow streets do not always allow for the larger snow removal equipment to be used. These streets will be cleared for emergency vehicles and then “cleaned up” with smaller equipment after the initial clean-up is done for all the streets. (See part 5).

In times of extreme snowfall, streets will not always immediately be able to be completely cleared of snow.

**Section B.** The city maintenance supervisor and the Street, Lighting, Parks & Recreation Committee will determine if and when snow will be removed from the area by truck. Such snow removal will occur in areas where there is no room on the boulevard for snow storage and in areas where accumulated piles of snow create a hazardous condition. Snow removal operations will not commence until other snowplowing operations have been completed. Snow removal operations may also be delayed depending on weather conditions, personnel and budget availability. The snow will be removed and hauled to a snow storage area. The snow storage area will be located so as to minimize environmental problems.

**4. Winter Parking**

Ordinance #76 prohibits parking on streets from November 1 to April 1 except in areas zoned commercial and for visitors.

**5. Priorities and schedule for which streets will be plowed**

The city has classified city streets based on the street function, traffic volume and importance to the welfare of the community. Snow Plow routes are high volume routes, which connect major sections of the city and provide access for emergency fire, police, and medical services, and will be plowed first.

The second priority streets are those streets providing access to schools and commercial businesses. The third priority streets are low volume residential streets. The fourth priority areas are alleys and city parking lots.

During significant and severe storms, the city must be prepared to move personnel and equipment to maintain priority routes first. In fulfilling the need to have all priority streets safe and passable, when resources are limited, plowing of all other streets may be stopped at any time so resources can be shifted to priority routes.

Unforeseeable circumstances may cause delays in completing assigned plow routes. Such circumstances may include weather conditions that endanger the safety of snowplow operators and/or safe and effective operation of equipment, commuter traffic, disabled vehicles, poor visibility conditions, parked cars along streets, assistance to emergency response vehicles, equipment breakdown, and personnel shortages.

**6. Weather conditions**

Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of city employees and equipment. Factors that may delay snow and ice control operations included: severe cold, significant winds, and limited visibility.

**7. Use of sand, salt and other chemicals**

The city will use sand, salt and other chemicals when there are hazardous ice or slippery conditions. The city is concerned about the effect of such chemicals on the environment and will limit its use for that reason.

## **8. Sidewalks**

The city will maintain sidewalks abutting city property only. Ordinance #45, Section 2, Subd. 1 & 2 states:

“All snow, ice, dirt, and rubbish remaining on a public sidewalk more than twelve (12) hours after its deposit thereon is a public nuisance. The owner and the occupant of any property adjacent to a public sidewalk shall use diligence to keep such walk safe for pedestrians. No such owner or occupant shall allow snow, ice, dirt, or rubbish to remain on the walk longer than twelve (12) hours after its deposit thereon.

The City Council or other designated official shall remove from all public sidewalks all snow, ice, dirt and rubbish as soon as possible beginning twelve (12) hours after any such matter has been deposited thereon or after the snow has ceased to fall. He shall keep a record showing the cost of such removal adjacent to each separate lot and parcel and shall deliver such information to the City Clerk

Section 10. Assessment. On or before September 1 of each year, the City Clerk shall list the total unpaid charges for each type of current service against each separate lot or parcel to which they are attributable under this ordinance. After notice and hearing as provided in Minnesota Statutes Section 429.061, the council may then spread the charges against property benefited as a special assessment under Minnesota Statutes, Section 429.101 and other pertinent statutes for certification to the county auditor and collection along with current taxes the following year or in annual installments, not exceeding ten, as the council may determine in each case.

Section 11. Penalty. Any person who maintains a nuisance in violation of Sections 2 and 3 and any person who interferes with a city employee or other authorized person in the performance of any current service under this ordinance is guilty of a misdemeanor, but a prosecution shall be brought for such violation only on the direction of the council. If convicted of such violation, such person shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$300.00 or imprisonment for not more than ninety (90) days, and the costs of prosecution in either case may be added.”

## **9. Mailboxes**

Coming into contact with a mailbox is a common obstacle snowplow operators face during storm activities. Only mailboxes actually hit by a snowplow will be the responsibility of the city. In such cases, and at the mailbox owner’s request, the city will replace the mailbox with a standard size, non-decorative metal mailbox and replace the support post as necessary with a 4’ x 4”, decay resistance wood support post, both installed by the city. Alternatively, the city will reimburse the mailbox owner \$50.00 for the replacement of the mailbox and post by others. The city will not be responsible for damage to mailboxes or support

posts caused by snow or ice coming into contact with the mailbox. Property owners are responsible for clearing the snow and ice away from the mailbox (es) to insure delivery of the mail.

**10. Complaint procedure**

Complaints will be recorded on a complaint form. Copies of complaints requiring service will be given to the maintenance supervisor. Emergency complaints will be handled in an expeditious manner as resources are available.

**11. Deviation from policy**

The maintenance supervisor may deviate from this policy when in his or her judgment it is in the best interest of the city or is necessary because of budget needs or other circumstances. Changes in priorities (lasting more than 4 hours) will be documented as to what caused such actions, why the change was necessary, and for how long the change is to be in effect. Those city employees and/or contractors affected will be notified immediately by radio or cell phone of such changes with all communications logged. Information logged will include the time and date of the communication, name of employee contacted, and how they were contacted. Any changes of priorities lasting more than 24 hours should be made in a written record and the public should be informed of such changes through normal methods used by the city for emergency notifications.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis when any necessary changes will be made. Any review will consider comments and complaints since the last review and any other factors affecting the policy or its implementation.

This policy is approved and adopted by the City Council of the City of Underwood and will be effective October 6<sup>th</sup> 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_ ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Bert Kinzler City Clerk Anna Kiser

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_