

Rural Municipality of Blaine Lake #434
Winter Maintenance Policy

Policy Statement

This policy is intended to be a guide as to how the RM conducts its winter maintenance program.

At least one of the following which may delay all or some of the services provided may affect all or parts of this policy:

- Equipment breakdown or manpower shortage
- Vehicle disabled in the snow
- Weather so severe as to prevent operators from getting to the RM shop
- Equipment rendered inadequate by the depth of snow and drifts
- Crew breaks, breaks required for refueling, changing of blades
- Unforeseen conditions and emergencies

Purpose

The purpose of this Winter Maintenance Policy and Procedure is to establish the process and level of service for the winter season.

General Objectives

The following are the objectives of the RM of Blaine Lake's Winter Maintenance Program:

- (a) To reduce the hazards of icy road conditions to motorists as well as maintain safe possible routes for buses, emergency vehicles as well as for commercial and passenger vehicles;
- (b) To maintain safe visibility for the operation of motor vehicles at driveways and intersections.

Procedures:

1. Implementation:

1.1 In order to meet these objectives, the following standards shall be adhered to (as closely as possible) by the Public Works employees. It must be noted that because no two winter storms are alike, it may not always be feasible to achieve the standards below due to insufficient equipment, manpower or severity of a storm, however, these standards should act as a guide to be followed wherever possible.

1.2 The following policies and procedures outlined herein will be in effect when the weather conditions could cause accumulations of frost, sleet, ice or snow on Municipal roadways and lots and will be in effect during the normal winter season.

1.3 The normal winter season for the RM of Blaine Lake is to be considered from November to April of the following year.

2. Monitoring and Notification of Snow/Ice Events

2.1 During normal office hours, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Thursday, the observations of Councillors and/or police may alert the first response for snow plowing. During after hours, police officers may direct the police dispatchers to contact any Councillor or the Administrator regarding road conditions. The Administrator will make the necessary arrangements to begin snow plowing operations.

2.2 The Administrator and Council will monitor weather conditions when inclement weather is approaching.

3. Winter Parking Bans

3.1 A Permanent Ban remains in effect on RM roads during heavy snowfalls for maintenance purposes. No motorized vehicles shall park or be positioned in a manner so as to interfere with

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snow plowing/removal by the RM graders. Any vehicle parked in violation of this section can be towed at the expense of the owner. Our goal is to restore safe road conditions quickly and this can be done more efficiently when roads are free of traffic and illegally parked vehicles.

4. Abandoned Vehicles

All abandoned vehicles left more than 48 hours along the roadway can be towed at the owner's expense. 48 hours shall start from the time it is reported and confirmed by the Administrator.

5. Illegally Plowed Snow

5.1 No person shall take snow from their property or driveway and deposit it on a municipal roadway within the Municipality.

5.2 Every person having deposited snow or permitted snow to be deposited on a municipal roadway shall be responsible to remove the snow from the roadway.

5.3 No person shall clear or remove snow from a municipal roadway in front of their residence and stock pile it on a municipal roadway.

5.4 No person shall take snow and deposit it on a municipal roadway or private property that abuts a municipal roadway in such a way as to obstruct the safe flow of traffic, for example impaired site lines when exiting private driveways or causing people to park in a traveled portion of highway or roadway.

6. Snow Plowing Operations

6.1 All storm conditions are dictated by temperature, the amount of moisture present in the storm, wind speed and duration. The combination of these factors is directly related to the conditions that dictate how a storm will be dealt with. Freezing rain, sleet, wet snow, dry snow, amount of snow, wind condition and time of day contribute to storm conditions.

6.2 During major storms, crews will continuously plow the higher priority routes to ensure proper traffic flow.

6.3 Roads will be cleared within two (2) days (48hrs) of the end of the snowfall event.

6.4 Plowing operations priority routes are based on the roads classifications indicated below in the attached Appendix "A". If the Councillor of a division has roads with specific needs, a highlighted division map will accompany this policy.

6.5 Determining Routes: The residential road surfaces shall be bared as time and equipment permit, or at the discretion of the Administrator. Subject to policy, the Administrator shall determine when the plows should be called out, by directive of council on a case by case basis, as each storm is expected to have different results.

6.6 The goal of the RM is to open roads as quickly as possible and keep them open throughout the storm. After heavy storms all roads will be pushed back as far as possible and corners widened. Residents need to be aware that snow banks will be pushed back and may end up into driveways. The RM is not be responsible for clearing private driveways.

6.7 Before or after season storms are on an equipment available basis. Equipment normally used for the winter season might not be available for the storm event. The RM will make every effort to achieve the Standard Levels as outlined.

7. Snow Removal

The level of service for snow removal shall be in accordance with the following:

7.1 Snow shall be removed using graders as staff and resources are available.

7.2 Collectors, Arterial and Intersections: Snow shall be moved using graders, as staff and resources are available.

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7.3 Priority routes shall be cleared first, followed by arterial streets. Special attention will be paid to hills and intersections.

8. Municipal Lots

The Grader Operators are responsible to maintain municipal lots. The lots will receive a priority lower than the roads and will be plowed as equipment becomes available and the storm conditions allow. Depending on the time of the storm and normal operating hours of each municipal lot will dictate the priority for plowing each lot. Municipal lots include: the community well, Petrofka Park, & the transfer station.

9. Cemeteries

Cemeteries will only be plowed after all roads have been cleared from snow unless a burial is scheduled, in which case only those roads needed to adequately serve the funeral service and grave site area will be cleaned. In most cases, other than after large snow events, all roadways will be cleared within five (5) days.

10. Claims for Damage

10.1 Mailboxes: The RM will not be responsible for any damages to objects located in the highway right of way including mail boxes, utility poles, garbage boxes, and commercial signs. Objects installed in the Right-of-Way are placed at the owners' risk. Each object installation should be sufficiently solid to withstand snow clearing efforts by the RM. The rolling action of the snow may damage posts and objects. Residents may want to place a second post to act as a brace or place reflectors on the box and post for visibility in poor conditions.

10.2 Windshields: The RM will not accept any claims from the public for windshield or vehicle paint chip damage resulting from snow and ice control during winter operations of snow equipment.

11. Driveways

RM equipment and contracted snow plows will not clear private driveways or other private property. Snow placed in a driveway where the driveway meets the Right-of-Way is the responsibility of the property owner to remove. If private snowplowing is sought, please see the Private Snow Clearing Policy and custom rates for more details.

12. Complaints

The RM office will register complaints. Calls for service should be avoided early in a storm event since it may take several hours for plows to make their way to certain roads. If there is an immediate emergency or feel that a road was missed, please call the office at 497-2282.

Summary

Driving in winter snowstorms should be avoided whenever possible. In every storm event there are, at times, when road conditions become too hazardous despite all efforts.

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Appendix "A"

The RM of Blaine Lake crew first clears bus routes/high traffic main roads, and country residential subdivisions. Then, the focus shifts to grid roads and farm access roads.