

ROAD COMMISSION FOR MONTCALM COUNTY SNOW REMOVAL POLICY

Revision to Snow Removal Policy (effective October 31, 2006)

Due to declining revenues, increased costs, and related budget limitations it was determined that Road Commission crews will not work overtime (after regular hours or on weekends) on local (township) roads or in subdivisions *unless* at least five inches of snow has fallen. Overtime on local roads will be allowed when less than five inches of snow has fallen only in cases of freezing rain or extreme drifting of snow. As in the past, overtime will be worked, when needed, on state trunklines and county primary roads.

Snow Removal Policy

Generally, plowing operations begin on state trunklines when slippery conditions exist or snow levels have reached a sufficient amount to be plowed. Plowing operations generally begin on county primary roads when slippery conditions exist or snow levels have reached about three inches. If snow continues to fall or is predicted, the snow removal crews are prepared to respond accordingly. Special attention is paid to hills, curves, and intersections. When snow has fallen during the night, plowing normally begins at 3 a.m., so the main primary roads will be as clear as possible by the time you start for school or work. If weather or driving conditions warrant, a crew will be called out at night to work with the Montcalm County Sheriff's Department to handle emergency situations. The Road Commission for Montcalm County and the Sheriff's Department work closely together year-round to make sure road conditions are safe for area motorists. The Sheriff's Department also handles emergency calls for the road commission after regular business hours and can alert road commission foremen to respond to a particular problem. The Road Commission for Montcalm County, in conjunction with Michigan Department of Transportation, has a night patrol to ensure road conditions are monitored and crews are dispatched as needed.

The snow route system

The Road Commission for Montcalm County has designated a special network of roads within the county as a snow route system. The state trunklines (M46, M57, M66, M82, M91 and US131) receive our first attention. Our goal is to provide the maximum level of service to the greatest number of people as quickly as possible when winter weather affects road conditions. This network of roads includes more than 160 miles. Once safe travel on these roads has been addressed, the crews move on to clear snow and ice from the county primary arteries. Local roads, primary gravel roads and subdivision roads are last to be cleared.

Using salt and sand

Salt is used on the snow route system to rapidly provide wet roads. It is applied as moderately as possible, without presenting unacceptable risk to the motoring public. To avoid excessive use of salt, the road commission also uses sand. Sand is used at intersections and on hills and curves on gravel roads, and paved roads when temperatures are too low to allow salt to work properly. The Road Commission also uses anti-icing procedures when conditions are favorable.

Plowing service limitations

The road commission's snow removal policy is designed to provide the best service possible, but residents should have realistic expectations. Unpredictable weather conditions or events and limited financial resources make it impossible to ensure absolutely safe roads. We encourage you to drive defensively. Even with the best service, driving conditions may still be hazardous in the winter months

Emergency Situations/Special Circumstances

In emergency situations, where roads are impassable, the Road Commission for Montcalm County will work with police and fire departments and doctors and hospitals, to the best of its ability, to provide access during emergency situations.

Clearing snow from driveways

State law (MCLA 257.677a) prohibits residents or businesses from plowing snow, ice or slush onto or across roadways or highways. In addition, snow must not be piled in such a way as to obstruct motorists' vision. Snowplows operate by pushing snow to the right, so when clearing your driveway, pile snow to the right of your driveway (as you face the road), keeping road shoulders clear; this will help reduce the amount of snow pushed into or in front of your driveway.

Damage to mailboxes and posts

(See Mailbox Replacement Policy effective January 1, 2009)

Mailboxes and posts in good condition generally withstand the force of snow plowed against them. In most cases, damage occurs during the plowing process because aged posts are unable to withstand the force of wet, heavy snow hitting them. The Road Commission highly recommends that non-standard, expensive and/or decorative mailboxes be removed during the winter months and be replaced with a standard mailbox. The Road Commission will replace mailboxes and/or posts with standard boxes and metal signposts only. Alternatively, a resident is entitled to a cash equivalent based on the cost of a standard mailbox and/or post—a maximum of \$25.00. Property owners must show that the box and/or post was damaged by Road Commission equipment and not by heavy or wet snow pushed against it. Large posts of wood, concrete, or steel are not permitted because they could prove hazardous to motorists, thereby creating liability for homeowners. Posts should be placed three feet from the edge of the pavement. The Road Commission is not responsible for clearing snow in front of mailboxes.

Abandoned cars

Cars abandoned in the right-of-way that interfere with the Road Commission's snow plowing equipment will be moved by the Montcalm County Sheriff Department, at the owner's expense. To avoid stalled cars during the winter, residents are advised to keep their cars in good working condition and not attempt to drive through snowdrifts. Road Commission personnel are not authorized or allowed to pull cars from snowdrifts; however, we will notify the Sheriff's Department of your need for assistance if you request it.

Road Commission for Montcalm County
619 W. Main Street, PO Box 337
Stanton, Michigan 48888-0337
Phone: 989-831-5285
or
Toll-Free at 877-992-6272
Fax: 989-831-8776
Website: montcalmroads.com