

# ITASCA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

## SNOW REMOVAL POLICY

### **OVERVIEW:**

With the advent of each Minnesota snow season comes the concern about access to work, school and business. The safety and convenience of the traveling public is a main concern of the Itasca County Transportation Department. The goal of the Transportation Department is to have all County Roads passable within a reasonable amount of time after a snowfall has stopped.

**THE COUNTY DOES NOT ASSURE A COMPLETELY BARE ROAD AND WILL NOT DEICE ENTIRE SECTIONS OF ROADWAY. USERS OF THE HIGHWAY SYSTEM ARE REMINDED TO EXERCISE CAUTION AND DRIVE WITH CARE. THE LEGAL SPEED LIMIT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE AT ALL TIMES.**

### **1. Dispatching of Snowplows:**

- a. The County will usually not dispatch snowplows until after a snowfall has stopped. During extended periods of snowfall, exceptions may be made. Snowplows will not be sent out in situations that may be hazardous due to restricted visibility. If snowfall stops during regular working hours, plows may be dispatched at that time. If the snowfall stops during the night, or early morning hours, snowplows may be dispatched before the normal start of work time, as deemed necessary by the District Maintenance Foreman. Weekend plowing will be handled in a similar fashion.
- b. Snowplowing for emergency situations will only be performed when the Sheriff's office makes the request. For emergencies, call 911.
- c. Snowplows will not be dispatched before November 1st or after March 31st, unless determined to be necessary, by the District Maintenance Foreman.
- d. Exceptions to the Snowplowing Policy may occur at times; when determined to be necessary by the County Maintenance Engineer or the County Highway Engineer.

### **2. Operations:**

Generally the clearing of roads will consist of three phases: making the road passable; widening and deicing; and cleaning up. Dependent upon the situation, more than one phase may be accomplished at one time. Private driveways under contract for plowing by the County will generally be plowed following the opening of County Roads and Township Roads under contract for County snowplowing.

#### **a. Make the Road Passable.**

Clean one lane in each direction. Generally plow and wing are used.

#### **b. Widen the Lanes to Edge of Shoulder/Deicing.**

Deicing is done at problem locations on paved/roads including intersections, curves, hills and bridges. Appropriate deicing activities will be used based on anticipated pavement temperatures and accepted deicing practices. At pavement temperatures below +20 degrees, salt use will be limited, as it becomes ineffective at lower temperatures.

#### **c. Clean Up.**

Remove ice and slush off roadway after deicing and sun have been allowed to work.

### **3. Personal Properties:**

- a. Mailboxes and fences damaged during snow removal will be evaluated case by case. Only those mailboxes and fences that were properly located and installed, and which were damaged by actual contact with County equipment will be repaired at County expense.
- b. As snow is plowed from roadways, operators leave as little snow across driveways as possible. County removal of this windrow is infeasible and remains the property owner's responsibility.

County residents are reminded that IT IS UNLAWFUL to plow snow from driveways onto or across County roads. Piles of snow left on or near the road can freeze into a solid mass creating a hazardous situation for vehicles and snowplows. Accidents and damages caused by snow piles placed in the roadway may result in liability to the property owner. Piles of snow increase the chances of drifting snow onto the roadway.

c. County residents are reminded to remove parked vehicles from County roads to assist in snow removal.

d. The Transportation Department may assist stranded motorists by contacting law enforcement/emergency personnel. The Transportation Department WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO REMOVE STUCK VEHICLES from ditches, snow banks or any other impediment.

### **4. Sidewalks:**

Sidewalks on County or County State Aid Highways within municipalities are the responsibility of the municipality, just as any other public utility. Policy of individual municipalities regarding sidewalk snow removal may vary between municipalities.

### **5. Information:**

Questions or concerns regarding snow removal and/or road conditions should be directed to County Highway Engineer at 327-2853.