

Winter Maintenance in the City of Ottawa



Get to know our operations – 2020/2021

- 12,900 lane kms of roadway
*** *Up from last year* ***
- 2,300 kms of sidewalks, multi-use pathways and trails
- 43 km of winter cycling lanes
- 525 operators
- 595 pieces of snow removal equipment
- 203 cm of snow last season
- 92 freeze / thaw events
- 56 hours of freezing rain
- 167,200 tonnes of rock salt



How do we plow the roads?

- Guided by the Council Approved (Winter) Maintenance Quality Standards (MQS)
 - Sets standards based on the class of roadway or sidewalk
- A full review of the winter maintenance quality standards related to residential roads and sidewalks is to be completed in 2021
 - Public consultations will be taking place in early 2021



What to expect during a winter storm



Minimum depth of snow before we deploy		End of snowfall – time needed to clear snow
At accumulation	Major roads – Highway 174 and Transitway	
2.5 cm	Downtown core, winter cycling network	4 hours
5 cm	Secondary roads	6 hours
5 cm	Most sidewalks	16 hours
7 cm +	Most residential roads	10 hours
	Bus Stops	24 hours

*** A significant snow or ice event may require service adjustments. ***



Before a Storm / When it isn't Snowing

Our staff work around the clock to keep residents safe as they make their way through our communities

- Before a weather event arrives, or when we are between storms, the work continues. Our teams:
 - monitor weather conditions and known problem spots
 - monitor road temperatures and respond as needed to treat icy patches
 - review the data coming out of our weather stations
 - Maintain, clean and repair equipment (installing new blades, cleaning salt boxes etc.)
 - Coordinate snow removal operations
 - Ensure safe sight lines
 - Conduct additional training
 - Fill potholes (if weather appropriate)
 - Clear catch basins
 - Manage salt / sand and grit



During a storm...

The storm begins

- Snow clearing operations begin
- **Clearing** is the focus

After the storm

- Clearing in all appropriate areas is completed
- **If quantity is there**, snow removal operations could be undertaken

Road clearing

- Clear the width of the road
- Clear bank height only if it is a **safety issue**



Ottawa

Plowing through a winter storm

Crews are deployed:

When storm begins

Highway 174 and Transitway
Major roads and arterials
(Woodroffe, Montreal Road, Bank, etc.)

After accumulation

Sidewalks and cycle lanes in the downtown core
Secondary roads and minor collectors
(Chapel, Dovercourt, Springbrook, etc.)
Residential roads and lanes
(Billings, Waverley, Smith, etc.)
Residential sidewalks
Cleaning up intersections and pedestrian crossings
Bus stops

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What should a residential road look like?

- Snow packed standard

The road will not be bare

The adjacent sidewalk – if there is one – will be cleared to the same standard as the road



Salt, Sand and Grit

- Salt is the most effective tool we have to melt ice
- 167,200 tonnes of rock salt used last season
- Salt works up to about -12 C
- Sand is used to provide traction
- It is used in areas where salt is not permitted (near the Canal)
- Used on rural roads
- Also when the temperature drops below -18 C
- Grit is a mix of salt and small stones/stone dust
- Effective on sidewalks and roads to melt ice and provide traction



Did you know?

- We clear the road for width, not snowbank height
- We will clear intersections for sight-line issues
- Homeowners are responsible for ensuring clear sight-lines at the end of their driveway
- Our plows and sidewalk machines may leave snow / windrows in the resident's driveway; it is the resident's responsibility to clear the windrow
- Property owners are responsible for maintaining their property
- Ditches and roadways should be clear of debris, obstructions and long grass
- The City has access to the public road allowance adjacent to a homeowner's property to store snow



How can residents help?

- If possible, remove leaves and debris from catch basins each fall
 - Leaves can be put at the curb as part of the Yard and Leaf Waste pick-up
- During winter, if possible, remove snow/ice from catch basins to allow water to flow during quick thaws
- Place recycle, waste and green bins in driveways, not in snow banks or on sidewalks
 - This makes it easier for our operators to clear the roadways right to the curb
- Keep your cars off the road as much as possible
 - We can clear the roads more quickly, and thoroughly, when the roads are clear



Keeping our Community Safe

During a snow event, we are doing our best to keep the roads and sidewalks safe for you and your family

- Our equipment is large and it is not always easy to see around it
 - *Did you know a plow needs 15 ft of space to operate?*
- We travel slowly in order to ensure the roads are evenly plowed or salted
 - Please stay 3 car lengths behind a plow with blue lights flashing
 - Do not try to pass a snow plow on the inside lane
 - Do not push snow onto the roadway – it can be dangerous for other drivers and slows down our clearing efforts



Please stay at least **15 metres**
(three cars lengths) back
from a snow vehicle



Winter Weather Parking Ban

- It can be called between November 15 and April 1.
- The Director of Roads and Parking Services may declare a Winter Weather Parking Ban for inclement weather including freezing rain or when Environment Canada forecasts 7 cm or more of snow in the Ottawa area. This includes any forecast for a range of snow more than 7 cm, such as 5 to 10 cm.
- The Winter Weather Parking Ban will be called to support clearing operations and will continue until the City issues notice that it has been lifted.
- Residents can stay informed about the winter weather parking ban through:
 - Social media
 - Mainstream media
 - Signing up for email alerts
 - Downloading the City of Ottawa App
 - Visiting Ottawa.ca
 - Councillor updates



Increased Winter Sidewalk Coverage

Last year, we made additional staff available to support the winter maintenance of sidewalks

- They were available overnight to maintain sidewalks

Staff are available to respond to conditions sooner

- Staff are sent out at 5 cm accumulation amount and have 16 hours to clear the snow away after the last snowflake falls
- In the past, staff were only on-site to respond during daytime hours

✓ This practice of increased sidewalk coverage will continue in 2020 - 2021



Sidewalk Equipment



- 10 icebreaker machines are available for sidewalks, breaking up ice and clearing build-up
- Hatched blades will be used to scrape the ice from sidewalks – removing it closer to the pavement to provide cleaner walking surfaces
- High capacity blowers are used to open up areas with heavy and wet snow (for example to ensure sidewalks don't become too narrow)
- Salt, sand and grit (a small stone and dust mixture) will be available at all City service yards, and supervisors will be able to choose the right one for weather and sidewalk conditions – be it to melt ice or to provide traction.

Questions?

