

## **CHAPTER 7 - SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL**

### **7.1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish the County policy and level of service in respect to clearance of snow or ice and maintenance of its secondary road system during the winter months, specifically defined as running from October 15<sup>th</sup> to April 20<sup>th</sup>, as provided in Iowa Code Section 668.10(2), as amended, and pursuant to the provisions of Iowa Code Section 309.67, as amended.

#### **a. Policy**

This policy and level of service are to be implemented within the amount of money budgeted for this service, and as contained in this County's secondary road budget as submitted to and approved by the Iowa Department of Transportation and adopted by the Board of Supervisors. The clearance of roads at any cost, under any circumstances, day or night, is not the County's policy.

### **7.1.2 Level of Service**

Clearance of snow or ice and maintenance of the secondary road system during the winter months is primarily for the benefit of the local residents of this County. Each storm has individual characteristics and must be dealt with accordingly.

#### **a. Winter Conditions and Service**

The portion of the roadway improved for travel will have upon it snow and ice in a compacted condition. These conditions may be continuous, or they may be more concentrated on hills, in valleys, curves, and/or intersections. The County's existing snow removal equipment will be utilized for this purpose.

All clearance of snow or ice, sanding, salting, and other maintenance respecting winter conditions shall be accomplished within the amount of money budgeted for this service. The entire width of that portion of the road improved for travel may not be cleared of snow, ice, compacted snow and ice, or frost.

#### **b. Storage of Cleared Snow**

Snow cleared from that part of the roadway improved for travel shall be placed on or in the adjacent shoulder, ditch, or right-of-way. Snow can be expected to accumulate adjacent to the traveled portion to the extent that a motorist's sight distance to both the left and right may be greatly reduced or impaired.

The snow removed from intersections will be piled in its comers in piles of unequal height. The line of sight, sight distance, or visibility of motorists approaching these intersections may be greatly reduced or impaired.

#### **c. Not Responsible for Actions of Others**

The County shall not be responsible for snow pushed or otherwise placed on the roadway or shoulders by others.

**d. Motorist Responsibilities**

Motorists shall operate their vehicles during winter snow and ice conditions with additional caution and watchfulness, especially in respect to the surface of the roadway, and reduced or impaired visibility, and are advised to reduce their speed to at least twenty-five (25) miles per hour below that legally permitted or advised under normal conditions. In respect to roadways that have only one lane open, further extreme watchfulness and caution should be exercised by the motorist, and their speed should not exceed ten (10) miles per hour.

**e. No Additional Signing**

During winter snow and ice conditions, no additional warning or regulatory signs will be placed warning of impaired sight distances, visibility at intersections, road blockages, one-lane conditions, or that the road surface is slick or slippery, or what the advised speed should be.

**7.1.3 Sequence of Service**

In the implementation of snow and ice removal and other maintenance of the County's secondary road system during the winter months, the County Engineer shall select the actual sequence of roads to be cleared as provided for in this Section of this Ordinance, and shall determine when drifting, wind velocity, and additional snow or snow storms require that the snow removal equipment be removed from the road way, or that additional clearance of paved routes be accomplished prior to the clearance of gravel and dirt roads. The County Engineer's professional judgment, or that of his or her designee(s), shall prevail.

**a. Paved Routes**

The first priority of snow and ice removal will be to re-open the paved and seal coat roads.

**(1) Initial Effort**

The initial effort will be to get all routes open to two-lane traffic as soon as possible and or practicable. During initial snow removal, paved roads may have only one lane plowed for a period of time.

**(2) Follow Up Service**

After two-lane travel is possible, subsequent snow removal will be carried on during normal working hours.

**(3) Limits of Service**

The truck mounted snow plows and spreaders will not normally be in operation between the hours 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 a.m. After the start of a winter storm, until two-lane traffic has been restored and shoulders cleared, the County Engineer may authorize the crews to start as early as 5:00 a.m. and/or work as late as 7:00 p.m. The trucks may be called off the road if snow and blowing snow reduces visibility to the point of creating hazardous working conditions, per the professional judgment of the engineer or his/her delegated representative.

**(4) Use of Graders**

When required, due to drifting snow, motor graders may be used to keep the paved roads open and the opening of gravel roads may be delayed.

**(5) Dry Pavement Not a Goal**

It is not the policy of the County to provide a "dry" pavement condition.

**(6) Sanding and Salting to Restore Traction**

After roads have been plowed, as provided in items one (1) through five (5) above, intersections, hills, and curves may, but will not necessarily, have sand, salt, or other abrasives placed on them. These intersections, hills, and curves may not be re-sanded, re-salted, or have repeat applications of abrasives between winter storm events.

**(7) No Pre-determined Schedule**

There is no preset time, after a snowstorm, by which any of the above sequence of plowing, clearing, sanding, or salting will be completed.

**b. Unpaved Roads**

Work on unpaved roads will commence as soon as possible, but will not receive as high a priority as the paved routes.

**(1) Initial Effort**

The initial effort will be to get all routes opened to one-lane traffic, as soon as possible and/or practicable after a storm has passed.

**(2) Follow Up Service**

After one lane travel is possible, subsequent snow removal will be carried on during normal working hours.

**(3) Service Limitations**

Motor graders and/or truck plows will not normally be in operation between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 a.m. During winter storms and until two-lane travel has been restored on all rock roads, the County Engineer may authorize the graders to start as early as 5:00 a.m. and/or work until 7:00 p.m. Gravel roads may not be plowed if wind is causing continual drifting.

When a winter storm creates snow or ice conditions on Friday nights, Saturdays, or Sundays, such that safe travel remains possible as long as drivers operate at reduced speeds and exercise due caution, clearance of such winter precipitation may be delayed until the following Monday.

**(4) No Clearance Provided on Level B Roads**

Snow will not be removed from roads designated in the Area Service Level B System.

**(5) No Pre-Determined Sequence or Schedule**

There is no preset time, after a snowstorm, by which any of the above sequence of plowing and clearing will be completed.

**c. Private Drives**

The County will not clear snow from private drives. Normal snow removal operations may result in snow being deposited in or across private drives. Snow from private drives shall not be placed on the roadway or shoulders.

**7.1.4 Limitations on Service**

The policy and level of service provided for in this Ordinance shall not include, and the following, services shall not be performed:

**a. No Frost Service**

Mills County will make no effort to perform sanding, salting, or placing of other abrasives upon roadways that are slick, slippery, and dangerous due to the formation of frost.

**b. No Overnight Plowing**

There will be no sanding, salting, or placing other abrasives upon paved roadways before 5:00 a.m. or after 7: 00 p.m., even when freezing rain is anticipated or occurring.

**c. No Additional Signage or Warnings**

Mills County will not place or erect additional warning or regulatory signs warning of impaired sight distances, visibility at intersections, road blockages, one-lane conditions, or that the road surface is slick or slippery, or what the advised speed should be.

**d. No Sanding of Unpaved Roads**

There shall be no sanding, salting, or placing of abrasives upon any road, except for paved roads, except under special circumstances as outlined in Sections 7.1.4(d)(1) through (3).

**(1) Special Exception**

If in the opinion of the County Engineer, or his/her designee, an emergency exists and ice has built up on hills and/or intersections of a gravel road which slope down to another road so as to create an exceptional hazard, sand or crushed rock may be applied, at these locations as a last resort.

**(2) Limits on Special Exception Work**

Application of abrasives on unpaved roads will not, under any circumstances, take a higher priority than the placing of abrasive material on the paved roads and will only, be done after all hard surfaced roads have been cleared of ice and snow.

**(3) Mechanical Means to be Tried First**

Placement of abrasive material on gravel roads will not be considered unless other mechanical means, such as use of ice bits and scraping windrows across the roadway have been tried and failed.

**e. No Guaranteed Service Between Storms**

Mills County does not warrant that it will re-sand or re-salt for freezing and thawing between snow storms.

**f. No Special Effort to Remove Abrasives from Road Surfaces**

Mills County will not conduct operations to remove sand, salt, or other abrasives from road surfaces after a storm or at the end of winter conditions.

**7.1.5 Emergency Response Policy**

The regular sequence of service may be suspended or modified during "Emergency" conditions.

**a. Local Emergencies**

A local emergency condition shall be considered as one where a loss of life is probable, where a serious injury has occurred, or where extensive loss of property is imminent. These conditions should be verified through a physician's office, the Sheriff's Office or the E911 Dispatcher.

**(1) Local Emergency Response**

The County will attempt to respond to all verified local emergency conditions, either during or after a snow storm but makes no guarantee that such efforts will successfully provide access to the location of the emergency in time to prevent loss.

**b. County, Regional, and State Level Emergencies**

The provisions of the Ordinance shall be further suspended in the event the Governor, by proclamation, implements the State disaster plan, or the Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors, by proclamation, implements the County disaster plan. If such occurs, the County personnel and equipment shall be immediately subject to the direction of the Governor or the Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors.