

City of Spirit Lake

Snow and Ice Removal Manual

This manual provides information on the City's operations with regard to snow removal for streets and sidewalks.

The Street Maintenance Division of the Public Works Department is responsible for keeping streets drivable during snow and ice events. Public Works crews do their best to anticipate and deal with the unpredictability of Midwest winter weather.

The City has designated snow routes along the major arterial streets. By design, these routes are generally located within four to six blocks of residential areas and have been designated as a priority based on a number of different factors, including traffic volume and geographic features. Please see our attached Snow & Ice Control Route Map.

Snow Events

Our Snow Removal Plan includes standard plowing procedures for two levels of storm intensity. During any snow or ice event, City Ordinance requires all vehicles to be removed from the street. Violators will be ticketed. Please note that the Street Maintenance Superintendent will determine snow depth by actual measurements, which may differ from those issued by the National Weather Service.

Level 1 Intensity Storm = Defined as snow or ice accumulations less than 2 inches. Snow and ice will be removed from the traveled portion of the street. Snow & Ice Control Routes will be plowed first with residential streets at the same time or shortly thereafter.

Level 2 Intensity Storm – Defined as snow accumulations of 2 or more inches. Snow & Ice Control Routes will be plowed during the snow event. Residential streets may be plowed during the snow event depending on the anticipated amount of snow. During this type of snow event, all streets may be plowed at least once and may be plowed two or three times depending on the severity of the snow event. The Street Maintenance crew will endeavor to have all streets cleared within 48 hours of the storm.

Residential streets are divided into zones for efficiency of service and plowed only after all primary snow routes are cleared curb to curb. Snow plows are assigned different sectors of the City and will work to clear that sector before moving on to the next.

Ice Events

Ice storms create inherent difficulties. Where a snow storm provides somewhat gradual buildups, ice storms create immediate immobility throughout the entire city. Every attempt shall be made to place every available salt truck on a posted route during an ice event. Once all of the Snow and Ice Control routes have been salted, crews will provide one pass on residential streets with salting at mid-block, hills and intersections.

Report a downed power line or loss of power by calling Alliant at 1-800-ALLIANT (255-4268). Do not touch downed power lines. And never assume someone else has reported a power outage. The information you provide helps Alliant Energy's electric outage management system pinpoint the source of the outage and speed the restoration process. Additional information about power outages is available at Alliant Energy's website at www.alliantenergy.com.

Mailboxes

A reminder to all those using rural mailboxes: City employees try to be extremely careful during snow removal operations not to strike the boxes with the snowplow. Frequently though, as snow is pushed off the roadway, the pressure of the snow will break a mailbox or the mounting post. The City Council has taken the position that the shoulder right-of-way is for snow removal purposes, and the City is not responsible for any damage to your mailbox as a result of snow pushed against it. Although the City does not object to residents having rural mailboxes installed in the right-of-way, property owners do so at their own risk.

To avoid having mailboxes destroyed, it would be helpful for residents to review attachment and mountings of the post and mailbox to be sure all components are tightly attached and sturdy.

In the event your mailbox is hit directly by a snow plow, the City will reimburse you for the cost of a new mailbox and parts as directed by the Public Works Director.

Sidewalk Snow and Ice Removal Rules

Per Spirit Lake City Code 136.03 Removal of Snow, Ice, and Accumulations. It is the responsibility of the abutting property owners to remove snow, ice, and accumulations promptly from all sidewalks in the City. If a property owner does not remove snow, ice or accumulations within twelve (12) hours after notice on Radio Station KUOO, the City may do so and assess the costs against the property owner for collection in the same manner as a property tax.

The City would like to take this opportunity to remind the public of the ordinance requirements regarding sidewalk clearing in Spirit Lake. Sidewalks must be cleared within a reasonable time, but in no case longer than 48 hours, after the snow has fallen or ice has formed, except in cases of severe weather. Exceptions to severe weather are periods normally defined as blizzards or severe frost bite warnings by the National Weather Service. If it is not reasonably practicable to remove the snow and ice from the sidewalk, the property owner shall spread suitable material upon the sidewalk to prevent the surface from being slippery. The failure of the owner of the abutting property to remove snow or ice from the sidewalk shall not make the City liable to any person for damages caused by the failure of the abutting property owner to remove snow or ice from the sidewalk. After the 48 hour period, the City will take action per its ordinance and remove the snow and ice and the costs will be assessed against your property. The same requirements for snow or freezing rain apply to sump pump or a house gutter discharge that forms ice on a sidewalk. To report a problem sidewalk, you can contact City Hall at 336-1871.

Spirit Lake Downtown Sidewalk Snow Removal Rules

Whenever 2 (two) or more inches of snow falls, the City will endeavor to clear sidewalks in the downtown area within 24 hours of the end of snowfall. The information used by the City of Spirit Lake to determine the depth of snow fall comes from a variety of sources including KUOO radio, the National Weather Service, and Accuweather.com.

The areas affected by this policy include the sidewalks along the following streets:

- Hill Avenue – Both Sides, from 15th Street to 19th Street
- Gary Avenue – Westside only, ½ block by Custom Creations
- Ithaca Avenue – Both Sides, Hwy 71 to 16th Street
- Jackson Avenue – Eastside only, Hwy 71 to alleyway between 16th and Lake Street
- Lake Street – Both sides, from Gary Avenue to Peoria Avenue
- 16th Street – Northside only, 1 block from Gary to Hill Avenue and both sides from Hill Avenue to Ithaca Avenue
- 19th Street – Northside only, ½ block from Alleyway between Hill and Gary to Hill Avenue

This clearing operation will take advantage of the low traffic occurring overnight and rarely occur during the day. Whenever less than 2 (two) inches of snow occurs, it is the property owners responsibility to clear the snow from the entire sidewalk from the building face to the street curb within 12 hours. Property owners may place snow from sidewalks in streets as long as the snow does not

interfere with parking or street traffic; otherwise, property owners should remove the snow from the site promptly.

For the most current information on snow removal activities in Spirit Lake, call City Hall at 712-336-1871.

