

SNOW PLOWING FAQ's

For questions regarding City of Marshall snow plowing operations, contact Marshall Public Works at 507-537-6773 or Public.Works@ci.marshall.mn.us.

How do I find out if a snow emergency has been declared?

Residents can find out if a snow emergency has been declared through the City's social media, news outlets, and the City website.

Why does it take so long for the streets to be plowed?

Following a snow event, it may take the City 12 hours or more to complete snow removal for all city streets, alleys, and parking lots. Oftentimes, snow removal operations carry over multiple days to complete all plowing, loading, and hauling tasks. Most of the Public Works staffing is required to "pitch in" to complete snow removal operations because our Street Department does not have enough employees to provide the type of response that our citizens have come to expect.

How many plows does the City have?

The City utilizes 2 wheel loaders, 1 mini-wheel loader, 3 motor graders, 4 plow trucks, 2 sander trucks, and 2 pickup plow trucks to complete snow removal operations for City streets and alleys.

Can I park on the street after it has been plowed?

All posted parking signs should be followed. Further, City Ordinance Sec. 74-121 (a) states that it is unlawful to park a vehicle on any street for a continuous period more than 48 hours. Lastly, when a snow emergency is declared, no on-street parking is allowed until the streets have been plowed curb to curb.

Does the City ticket or tow vehicles parked in the road during a snow event?

Per City Ordinance Sec. 74-121 (a), if a vehicle is parked for a period of time in excess of 48 hours the vehicle may be ticketed or towed. It is common for City staff to review streets following snow events to make sure that vehicles are moved to allow for more complete snow removal to occur. Further, if a snow emergency is declared, all vehicles must be removed from the street for the duration of the emergency declaration.

My road is icy. Can you send someone out to apply sand or salt?

The City is constantly monitoring roadway conditions during and after snowfall events. This includes Marshall Police patrol staff. Citizens are advised to slow down and drive to the road conditions, not the posted speed limit. Citizens should also be aware that if the temperature is less than 15 degrees, salt is not typically effective in melting ice.

Why doesn't my street get plowed to the curb?

City staff makes their best effort to plow from curb to curb while also not riding entirely along the curb which may cause damage. After multiple snow events, snow piles higher and higher and begins to act as a berm. This snow berm makes it more difficult to clear snow from curb to curb as the snow will fall back into the street after it is plowed. As a result, the road may begin to get narrower.

Can you tell me when the plow will go by my house?

Oftentimes, the City snowplows can begin operations as early as 3 a.m. or 4 a.m. Our crews work systematically to clear all streets; however, routes may not be identical due to snowfall amounts, staffing changes, current conditions, parked cars, etc. Snow removal operations can last well into the afternoon or early evening, so please be patient as we work to clear your street!

The snowplow hit my garbage or recycle cart!

The City appreciates the carts being placed out of the roadway and a couple of feet behind the curb to allow for effective snow removal operations. The City is not responsible for damaged carts. Call your hauler for a replacement cart if needed.

The snowplow damaged my mailbox. Who will fix it?

The City will conduct a review of each mailbox incident to determine whether a snowplow blade came into direct contact with the mailbox or its support structure. The City will only repair if the mailbox is directly hit by a plow. If the City determines responsibility, the City will repair the mailbox to an operational state. If it cannot be repaired, the City will replace the mailbox or post. Please ensure that your mailbox is installed correctly and in accordance with United States Postal Service standards. Information on USPS mailbox standards can be found here <https://www.usps.com/manage/mailboxes.htm>.

The snowplow damaged my yard. Who will fix it?

The City will review. If the City determines that the plow damaged the yard, the damaged area will be added to a list of repair locations. The City will restore damaged turf area in the Spring with black dirt and seed. Property owners are responsible for watering and care following City seeding and restoration work.

Can I just plow my own street?

No, residents may not plow city streets. City Ordinance Sec. 62-2 (d) states that it is a misdemeanor to push snow into or across a city street and MN State Statutes 160.2715 and 169.42 prohibits snow or ice from being pushed into or across the street.

Can I push snow from my driveway into or across the street?

No. City Ordinance Sec. 62-2 (d) states that it is a misdemeanor to push snow into or across a city street or to otherwise deposit snow onto City property and MN State Statutes 160.2715 and 169.42 prohibits snow or ice from being pushed into or across the street.

Can you lift the plow or otherwise not deposit so much snow in my driveway?

Snowplow operators have little control over how much snow is deposited in your driveway. Lifting the plow would deposit a large pile of snow in the street and turning the plow for every driveway is not feasible and would result in a similar situation with snow being moved into the street.

Do the snowplows damage the street?

Generally, snowplows do not do much damage to the streets; they simply push snow to the outside edges. The plows can cause damage if a manhole cover or other piece of infrastructure is elevated above the street profile.

The street is getting narrower, can a plow come out and widen the road?

When plowing, the snow is simply being pushed to the outside edge of the road. Over time, the streets will get narrower as the snow piles up and the snow piles grow taller. If necessary and time allows, City crews may be deployed to push back snow piles.

What roads do Lyon County and MnDOT plow?

Lyon County is responsible for plowing County Road 33/Erie Road, County Road 7/Airport Road, and Fairgrounds Road. MnDOT plows Main Street, MN 23, and College Drive. The City participates with downtown snow removal by plowing snow from the parking lanes to the center for later removal.

Does the City clear snow away from fire hydrants?

Marshall Municipal Utilities staff may clear snow from around hydrants if conditions require it. If you live adjacent to a fire hydrant, it is good practice to help out and keep space around the hydrant clear for possible use in the event of a fire. It is also good practice to remove snow from around nearby catch basin/storm water inlets to help ensure good drainage once the snow begins to melt.

Why is salt bad for the environment?

When snow and ice melts, the salt that we spread on icy roads, parking lots, and sidewalks flows into storm drains where it then makes its way into our rivers, lakes, and wetlands. Salt is harmful for aquatic life and drinking water. For more information, please visit the MPCA website at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/chloride-101>.

What is the most important thing that drivers should be aware of when the snowplows are out?

The snowplow operators need space to operate. The heavy equipment and plows that are used may have blind spots, and they may turn or back up unexpectedly. Please stay back and do not crowd the plows or other snow removal equipment!

Who is responsible for snow removal on sidewalks?

Snow removal from sidewalks is the responsibility of the property owner located adjacent to the sidewalk. City Ordinance Sec. 62-2 requires snow and ice to be removed within 24 hours after snow or ice has ceased to fall. If snow is not removed in this time period, the City can cause the snow to be removed and bill the adjacent property owner for the work.

Can you put sand or salt on the sidewalks?

The City is not responsible for sidewalk snow and ice removal. Each individual property owner may apply salt to help with ice removal on their sidewalk. If salt is used, we recommend that you limit the quantity of salt to reduce the harmful impact to the environment. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) recommends no more than a coffee mug filled with salt for a typical two-stall driveway and 5-FT sidewalk area of a residential property.