
Winter Operations Plan

November 2017

Q: How many kilometers of roads is the Town of Pelham responsible for maintaining?

A: The Town is responsible for maintaining approximately 572 km of roadway, 64 km of sidewalks, and 2.1 km of paved walking trails.

Q: A heavy snowfall has just occurred, when will the Town plow my street?

A: Once more than 5 cm of snow has accumulated on the roads, the Town uses a priority system to plow the roads, beginning with primary (arterial) roads followed by secondary (residential) streets. This priority response is based on regulatory requirements. When possible, combination plow trucks are sent out just prior to a snow event or when the snow starts to fall, to treat hills, intersections, and sharp curves – also beginning with arterial roads.

Q: My Street isn't plowed and it's difficult to leave my house. Why do some roads always get first priority?

A: Primary Roads are those with heavy traffic volumes or steep hills; they are also connection roads that provide access to a majority of secondary roads. These roads are plowed first for safety reasons to ensure routes are clear from emergency and transit vehicles. The Town's goal is to plow all streets with 12-24 hours after the snowfall has reached 5 cm of accumulation. During periods of heavy snow fall, plowing operations can take longer and there may be some delays. Please be patient – the plows will get to your street as soon as possible.

Q: It stopped snowing yesterday, but my road or sidewalk hasn't been plowed. What should I do?

A: The Town endeavors to have all roads plowed within 16 hours after the snow accumulation has reached 8 cm, and within 24 hours for all sidewalks. Extreme conditions or unique situations may delay these response times. The Town monitors the plow routes via an internal mapping system, so please be assured that plowing will take place as soon as possible. If you are concerned that your area has been missed (after 16 hours has passed since the storms has ended), please contact the public works department at 905-892-2607 x332.

Q: Who determines which streets get plowed first?

A: The Town of Pelham follows the provincially prescribed standards for winter maintenance (Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways, O. Reg. 239/02). Arterial and some collector roads with higher volumes of traffic take first priority, while local streets and cul-de-sacs with lower traffic volumes are plowed after the priority roads are completed.

Q: Why are cul-de-sacs and dead end streets plowed later than other streets, or only partially plowed?

A: Since cul-de-sacs are secondary roads, they will be cleared later than high-traffic roads. Also, due to the small turning radius afforded by most cul-de-sacs, the large trucks cannot play the circular part of the street as effective as other roads. In many area, a separate plowing machine is sent later to clean up these areas. Snow that is piled up in the centre of the cul-de-sacs will be removed when it becomes a hazard to drivers and/or the public.

Q: Why does the snowplow seem to dump a lot of snow on corner lots?

A: Residents living on corner lots usually have slightly more snow deposited in front of their houses as there is a larger portion of roadway that needs to be cleared at an intersection. This sustain becomes worse for those home adjacent to “Bullnose Corners”.

Q: Why are some areas of the street not plowed entirely?

A: Most problem areas on streets are the result of parked cars blocking the snow plows or residents dumping snow from their driveways back onto the public roadway. For adequate snow clearing operations, the streets must be clear of parked cars. Residents are prohibited from parking vehicles on the street, either during or following a snowstorms, and are prohibited from dumping snow on the street.

Q: The snowbanks in the downtown area are getting high, when are they removed?

A: Once the snowbanks in the village core(s) impede sightlines for parking vehicles, a “commercial area clean up” is scheduled. This is done in the very early hours of the morning to avoid disruption to our local business in the core area. Commercial area clean ups will only commence once Town staff have been allowed the legislated driver rest period under the Ontario Regulation 555/06 of the Highway Traffic Act. As well, additional snow must not be forecast for a minimum of 24 hours.

Q: What should I do when a snow-covered catch basin is causing flooding during a thaw?

A: If possible, citizens are encouraged to clear snow-covered catch basins safely to avoid flooding. Alternatively, you can call the public works department at 905-892-2607 x332. Citizens are also encouraged to clear ditches of leaves and debris so that culverts do not become blocked.

DRIVEWAYS**Q: Can the snow plows minimize the amount of snow left at the bottom of my driveway?**

A: The crew’s priority is to clear the travelled portion of the road. The only place to move the snow is onto the boulevard, which includes driveways. As a result, snow left at the bottom of the driveways is sometimes unavoidable.

Q: Does the Town come back to remove snow its plows have dumped in my driveway?

A: Owners/occupants of residential and business properties are responsible for keeping driveways clear of snow down to the street. Because street plowing operations push snow from the road to the boulevard, the does fill in driveways. Unfortunately, the Town does not have the resources to come back to remove snow left by its plows at the end of driveways.

Q: I am not physically able to shovel my driveway, who can help me?

A: Please check the Yellow Pages or an online search engine for listings, or try Snow Buddies for Seniors, Community Support Services Niagara (905-682-3800 x28). You may be able to get assistance from a family member, friend, or neighbor. There are also a number of private snow clearing business in the area. The Town does not offer snow clearing assistance on private property.

Q: What do I do if I have an emergency and cannot get out of my driveway due to snow?

A: In the event of a fire or medical emergency, call 911. Emergency services will contact the Town's snow clearing crews and we will work in cooperation with police, fire, and ambulance to make sure they can reach you.

Sidewalks**Q: Who removes snow from the sidewalks?**

A: The Town provides a sidewalk snow removal service using a local contractor. Sidewalks are cleared to a snow packed condition but the equipment does not all for clearing down to bare pavement. When the amount of snow is so great that plowing is no longer effective, blower attachments may be used, however this does not increase the amount of time it takes to clear the sidewalks. Property owners are encouraged to apply snow and ice melt to sidewalks then they become icy. The Town's contracted service provided is not able to apply ice melt to all municipal sidewalks.

Q: Why have the sidewalks not been plowed yet?

A: Similar to road plowing, sidewalk snow removal follows a priority rout system. Once the snow accumulation reaches 5 cm and has stopped falling, sidewalk plows are dispatched and it may take up to 24 hours before all sidewalks have been cleared – depending on the depth of the snow and weather conditions. The Town will endeavor to address these areas during the cleanup phase of our response procedures, normally 24-72 hours after a snow event.

Q: The sidewalk plow has damaged my landscaping or driveway edging, what do I do?

A: Placing or hardscaping such as retaining walls and driveway curbs are not permitted on the municipal portion of a boulevard unless designed, engineered, or otherwise approved by the Town. These items can damage the plow and cause injury to the operator. Repair of landscaping items placed adjacent to the sidewalk are the responsibility of the property owner. The cost to repair damaged equipment caused by these items may be recovered from the property owner. Shrubs and other vegetation adjacent to sidewalks should be trimmed or pruned so that they do not impede pedestrians or sidewalk plow operations.

Q: I just removed snow from my driveway left be they road plow, and now the sidewalk plow has deposited snow back onto it. Why can't the sidewalk plow and road plow come down the street at the same time?

A: The Town understands the frustration that this causes. Unfortunately, due to the variations in the plow routes, the difference in the capability and speed of sidewalk plows vs. road plows, and the difference in priority routes, it's near impossible to align the timing and scheduling of the sidewalk and road plowing operations.

Q: I just moved into a new subdivision, why isn't my sidewalk being plowed?

A: The Town does not provide sidewalk plowing to areas where the sidewalk is not continuous. If there are sections of sidewalk missing across empty lots, that section of sidewalk will not be plowed.

Fire Hydrants**Q: Who is responsible for clearing snow around fire hydrants?**

A: The Town of Pelham is responsible for clearing snow around fire hydrants, however, property owners are strongly encouraged to clear snow from fire hydrant on or around their property to ensure fire and emergency services can quickly gain access in the event of a fire.

Boulevard Damage**Q: The snow plow has damaged my sod, when is it going to be repaired?**

A: Sod damage is normally the result of two factors: if the ground is not frozen during plowing operations or the plow operator may have difficulty finding the sidewalk edge of the road under a blanket of snow. Once a path is cleared, subsequent trips by the sidewalk plow are made easier. If the sod was damaged during the early part of the season, then the damage may not be discovered until the snow melts. Many homeowners will repair the damage in front of their property before the Town crews arrive. This is a tremendous help because Town staff typically does not tend to sod damage until late May, when the ground is warm enough to allow for repairs. Town staff will topsoil and seed areas where the plow has caused damage, however, it is the homeowner's responsibility to care for the area once it's been seeded.

Mailboxes**Q: When will snow be cleared from around the Canada Post mailboxes?**

A: Canada Post maintains the area around their mailboxes and is responsible for snow clearing. If you have any concerns, please contact Canada Post: 1-800-267-1177.

Q: The snow plow has damaged my mailbox, when will it get repaired?

A: The Town of Pelham will repair or replace rural mailboxes as long as they conform to the current Canada Post Standard and if damage is deemed to result from a direct strike by a snow plow equipment operated by Town staff. Mailboxes replaced by the Town will be a basic rural mailbox not to exceed \$100 for bot post and box. Mailboxes damaged by snow impact from the plow equipment will not be eligible for repair or replacement. The responsibility for maintaining mailboxes and posts in good repair lies with the homeowner.

For more information, please contact:

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