

**TREMPEALEAU COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
2017-2018 WINTER MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES
FOR THE COUNTY TRUNK HIGHWAY SYSTEMS**

General

The goal of winter maintenance is to make roadways safe within the limitations of resources, roadway protection and environmental concerns. Hence, motorists can expect some inconveniences and will be expected to modify their driving practices to adapt to road conditions.

Plowing is to be the primary means of snow removal. Salt is used principally to keep snow from bonding to the pavement, which in turn facilitates clearing of the pavement after a storm. Salt/sand combination is used to provide traction.

Definitions

A "passable roadway" is defined as a roadway surface that is free from drifts, snow ridge and as much ice and snow pack as is practical and can be traveled safely at reasonable speeds. A passable roadway should not be confused with a "dry pavement" or "bare pavement" which is essentially free of all ice, snow and any free moisture from shoulder to shoulder. This "dry/bare pavement" condition may not exist until the weather conditions improve to the point where this pavement condition can be provided.

The definition of "reasonable speed" is considered a speed that a vehicle can travel without losing traction. During and immediately after a winter storm event, a reasonable speed will most likely be lower than the posted speed limit. Motorists can expect some inconvenience and will be expected to modify their driving practice to suit road conditions.

An "open roadway" is defined as a roadway surface that does not have both lanes "impassable" to traffic. "Impassable" is defined as a roadway in which most vehicles cannot operate on the roadway without the assistance of snowplows or other snow removal or towing equipment.

Level of Service

All county trunk highways, regardless of class, will receive normal service to keep "passable roadways" between the hours of 4:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. No service between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. except to keep an "open roadway" in all types of winter storm events.

During weekends and holidays, service will be restricted to plowing of snow in excess of an average of 3 inches or more between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. No service between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. except to keep an "open roadway" in all types of winter storm events.

Sanding and salting of all critical areas as practical after the storm. "Critical Areas" shall be defined as curves, hills and intersections.

Priority Routes

High Volume roads shall have priority over low Volume roads. All county trunk highways shall have priority over town roads.

If additional men and equipment are not designated or unassigned, they may be assigned to lesser priority road maintenance.

Note: Special attention and cooperation will be given to requests from the Sheriff's Department or Emergency Management to plow out roads when a threat of health or life exists. (Examples are: need for an ambulance to reach a farm house to pick up a heart attack victim, for care to a mother in childbirth, or when there is a fuel or energy outage affecting the elderly or children.)

Chain of Command

The Highway Commissioner is the Department Head and shall have authority over all winter maintenance operations. He shall designate, as required, the necessary responsibility to Department Supervisors to implement the Winter Maintenance Policy. Standard Operating Procedures for winter storms shall be as follows:

When it appears a major winter storm is in progress, which might require special efforts on the part of the Highway Department, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. a. Patrol Superintendent Alternate being on call on a weekly basis,
 b. Foremen including weekends and holidays.
2. The Commissioner, if not in service, shall be advised.

Supervisors will study the storm conditions and decide the level of response required.

Use of Salt and Sand/Salt

The Supervisors in charge shall determine the time and place to use salt and/or sand/salt based on prevailing conditions at the time of the decision. All salt spreaders shall be calibrated to deliver no more than 300 pounds of salt per lane mile when practical.

Operations

Stalled Vehicles: Stalled vehicles shall not be moved by County Highway personnel or equipment, unless the vehicle is in the traveled roadway and endangering the traveling public. Department personnel encountering such obstacles shall notify their immediate supervisor, if possible, before any action is taken.

Mailbox Replacement: Mailboxes shall not be allowed closer to traffic than the shoulder line (outside edge of the shoulder), with the box and base strong enough to withstand wind, flying snow and slush from traffic and snowplows. Operators who hit mailboxes with their plow or wing shall note time and place of the incident and report same to their immediate supervisor as soon as practical.

Mailboxes and/or bases hit by County equipment shall be repaired or replaced, whichever is more practical, as soon as emergency snow removal operations have abated. All reports of damage and potential damages that are reported by private citizens shall be turned over to the County's insurance carrier as soon as practical.

Documentation of all incidents shall be mandatory and it shall be the responsibility of the Supervisor in charge to ensure compliance.

Departure from Guidelines

The Trempealeau County Highway Committee recognizes that conditions may be so unusual or unexpected that a departure from these guidelines should be authorized. Therefore, when conditions warrant, the Highway Commissioner, in consultations with the Patrol Superintendent, and/or Sheriff, may order a departure from these general rules when, in his opinion, conditions warrant such action.

Adopted on November 15, 2017

Trempealeau County Highway Committee:

John Aasen, Chairman

Michael E. Nelson, Vice Chairman

Curt Skoyen, Secretary

Douglas Winters, Member

Ernest Vold, Member