

SNOW REMOVAL POLICY

NORTH LEBANON TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

September 1, 2011

The North Lebanon Township Highway Department has developed a SNOW REMOVAL POLICY in order to allow the residents of North Lebanon Township a better understanding of snow removal operations and procedures. The Township reserves the right to deviate from this policy at any time due to weather conditions, manpower shortage, material shortage, equipment failure, CDL restrictions, or any other unforeseen problem.

The goal of the Highway Department is to efficiently and safely remove snow and ice from the roadways.

The Highway Department consists of five full-time employees. These employees are class B CDL licensed operators and are subjected to random drug and alcohol testing and by law are only permitted to drive 10 contiguous hours, which must be followed by a minimum 8-hours off-duty, unless the Board of Supervisors' declare an emergency. Multiple snowstorms can cause problems with the CDL restrictions on driving hours and a bare road surface may not always be possible.

During a normal snow event 2 Highway Department employees will drive two single axle 10-ton dump trucks each equipped with a spinner type spreader and a 12-foot stationary plow. Two other employees in the Highway Department drive two tandem axle 15-ton dump trucks each equipped with a spinner type spreader and a 12 foot-stationary plow. Depending on the severity of each storm the Highway Department has 2 front end loaders, grader with a v-plow attachment, and a John Deere tractor usually used for mowing in the summer that can be put into action with a plow attachment. When additional equipment is needed to combat whatever Mother Nature throws at us the township is able to call in the three-full time Wastewater Department employees, as well as our Mechanic and Park & Recreation Foreman, who are also class B CDL licensed operators. This allows the men to work shifts to accomplish the job, or depending on the snowfall have everyone out at once to get the job done sooner!

There are approximately 61.5 miles of Township maintained roads, and approximately 20 miles of State maintained roads in North Lebanon Township. It is important to note that North Lebanon Township **does not** perform winter maintenance (salting or plowing) on State maintained roads for liability reasons.

The State Roads that are State maintained are as follows.

Rte 72

Route 422

Heilmandale Road

Tunnel Hill Road

N. 22nd Street

Sandhill Road/Grace Avenue

N. 7th Street/Rte 343

Mt. Zion Road, Weavertown Road (between E. Maple Street and Mt. Zion Road)

E. Maple Street, N. 15th Avenue (between Rte 422 & Weavertown Road)

Prescott Drive.

*Please contact **PaDOT at 450-2223** if you have any concerns regarding these specific State roads.*

The North Lebanon Township Highway Department employees are "called out" by the Roadmaster. The Roadmaster is notified of poor winter weather conditions by either the North Lebanon Township Police Officer on duty or a 911 dispatcher. Once a call is made it generally takes 30-60 minutes before the winter maintenance operation begins. Each driver must perform a "pre-trip" inspection of the vehicle before loading the material. Depending on the timing of the storm, application of anti-skid and salt usually takes 3 hours, plowing takes nearly 8 hours. Salt is stored under roof with a capacity of nearly 600 tons. Anti-skid material is also stored under roof with a capacity of 300 tons. The Highway Department is currently expanding this facility, which will be fenced in to deter vandalism and theft of materials. In a typical year the Highway Department uses 300 tons of salt and 600 tons of anti-skid. We typically use a ratio of 2/1 anti-skid to salt mixture. During a typical "callout" the Highway Department uses about 33 tons of salt and 66 tons of anti-skid. Material has to be ordered and trucked in throughout the winter season.

The first operation during a snow event of any magnitude is to get salt and anti-skid down on the roads to keep the snow from adhering to the road surface. Salt can melt off a depth of 2" of snow depending on the conditions. Temperatures above 20°F and traffic help salt to work at its' best. Temperatures below 20°F will cause salt to lose the effectiveness. Under these conditions the additive of calcium chloride or magnesium chloride should be added to the salt. At the present time the Highway Department has limited capabilities to use calcium chloride, as a salt additive.

A snow event where multiple inches is forecast applying salt and anti-skid is still the first part of the operation. After this material has been laid, plows are attached and snow plowing begins. Plowing usually takes place when there is 3 to 4 inches of snow accumulated. Material can still be put down during the plowing process and most of the time it is. Certain persistent storms that require the routes to be plowed several times the anti-skid and salt mixture is not put down again until the end of the storm is near. This is done primarily to save material from being wasted.

Each driver is assigned a route that they normally follow year after year, so they can become accustomed to problem areas such as hills and curves. These routes have been well thought out. First, high traffic roads with hills, getting to these roads right away is important for obvious reasons. Traffic can quickly pack down the snow making it glaze over and extremely slippery. With steep hills in the mix multiple accidents are possible and an impassible road is probable. Second consideration is to keep main roads open, then as the storm draws to an end other streets, such as those in developments are addressed.

THE ROUTES

Western District – Truck #2 and #6 (Single Axle 10-ton Dump Trucks) -

Central District – Truck #4(Tandem Axle 15-ton Dump Trucks) -

Eastern District – Truck #3 (Tandem Axle 15-ton Dump Truck) -

Main roads are plowed first and maintained in a passable condition during the snow event. Under a “normal” snow event streets in a development are addressed near the end of the storm.

Routes do change a little depending on various circumstances and manpower. All vehicles are cleaned and checked after each and every snow event. Equipment failures are common in the winter, as equipment is exposed to severe conditions. Plow blades wear out and have to be replaced periodically, spreader augers wear out, hoses burst, lights burn out, all are problems that have to be dealt with during the winter. We are fortunate to have a mechanic on staff that can be called out for repairs, as necessary, during these snow events.

Finally, the role the resident plays in snow removal. Snowstorms are stressful for both our residents and our Highway Crew. When a storm occurs during the week around rush hour traffic becomes one of those uncontrollable problems, slowing down our operation significantly. Shoveling snow out on to the road is a violation and individuals can be issued a citation by our Police Department. This snow can re-freeze and cause a driver to lose control of their vehicle; a potential liability for you.

Township drivers are not permitted to clean driveways or do anything special for any of our 11,400+ residents. With maintaining 61.5 miles of township roads we must focus on the goal of clearing township streets for the traveling public. If you must clean your driveway before the trucks are completely finished with plowing the street, clean an area before your driveway (based on the direction of travel) to allow the bulk of the snow to discharge there instead of your driveway. Also, make sure your mailbox post is strong and able to withstand snow hitting the post as it is being discharged from the plow. Check the box; make sure it is firmly attached to the post. Mailboxes are considered a structure on the township right of way. A sound post and securely attached box should not be knocked over by snow coming off the plow. All drivers are instructed to drive as slow as realistically possible during wet snows in order to minimize the problems with mailboxes. If a driver physically hits a mailbox with the truck/plow, they are instructed to report it immediately to the Roadmaster or office staff and the Township will purchase a new box to replace the damaged one if it cannot be repaired. Most mailboxes are knocked down from the snow as it comes off the plow. Mailboxes knocked down because of snow are the responsibility of the resident.

For those residents that live in an area with public water. Please remember to clear the snow around the fire hydrants in your area. During an emergency, time is of the essence, so clearing out the fire hydrants following a snow event will eventually save precious seconds/minutes should an emergency occur in your neighborhood.

Please stay clear of equipment when in use or idling. Because of various equipment attached to the truck the driver may not see you. For these reasons you should not approach a driver unless he acknowledges you. Do NOT assume they see you, as you may be in a blind spot, or the driver may be focused on other obstacles.

The North Lebanon Township Highway Department is committed to providing the best service as possible. As mentioned, a lot of problems are uncontrollable, traffic, time of storm (day or night), duration of the storm, amount of snow, wind, equipment failures, and fatigue, all hinder the process. Please be patient and help us help you. Remember, no two storms are alike and most times the way we address a storm is based on weather forecasts, which we all know are not always accurate.