

TOWN OF STRATHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Winter and Inclement Weather Policy and Priorities

Pursuant to RSA 231:92-a, the Stratham Board of Selectmen hereby establishes the following policy and procedure for winter and inclement weather road maintenance.

Part A: Policy Objectives.

1. Objective. The Town of Stratham seeks to provide timely, efficient and cost-effective winter maintenance, snow removal, and ice control on the Town's public roadways for the safety and benefit of the Town's residents and the general motoring and pedestrian public.

2. Procedure. The objective stated in Section 1 may best be achieved by implementation and execution of the procedures and tasks outlined in Part B of this Policy, the Town's Winter Operations Snow Removal and Ice Control Procedures. Due to the many variables that are inherent in New England weather, each storm or weather event may require slightly different effort or emphasis on any number of maintenance tasks which, together, determine the overall winter maintenance, snow removal or ice control strategy.

3. Level of Service. It is not reasonably possible to maintain a snow- and ice-free road during a storm. The Town intends to utilize its best efforts, within the means available, to provide practical, safe access to homes, businesses, and municipal and other public facilities during and after winter storms.

(A) As a general policy, the Town may conduct snow removal operations upon accumulations of six (6) inches of snowfall. The Road Agent may, at his or her discretion, based upon weather information reports or prevailing conditions, elect to not remove snow until greater or lesser amounts have accumulated.

(B) Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, snow removal or road treatment operations may be suspended at any time when continuing operations would pose a hazard to persons or property.

(C) Pre-treatment and ice control may be implemented prior to, during, or after a storm, as determined to be most effective, noting that salt has a much slower effect on melting snow and ice at temperatures below 25 degrees Fahrenheit, and thus may not be applied until it is warmer.

4. Direction. The Stratham Road Agent, or the Road Agent's designee, shall direct all winter maintenance activities for the Town.

5. Implementation. This policy, including the standard operating procedures set forth in Part B, is intended to serve as the normal procedure for winter maintenance, snow removal, and ice control for the Town of Stratham. One or more of the following

events or circumstances, which may delay or prevent the implementation of this policy, may affect all or any part of normal operating procedures:

- Equipment Breakdown
- Snow Accumulation in Excess of One Inch per Hour
- Freezing Rain or Other Icing Conditions
- Traffic Congestion
- Emergencies
- Personnel Illness
- Other Events Beyond the Reasonable Control of the Town

6. Notice. This policy may be posted in appropriate public places in the Town as determined by the Selectmen. All residents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the contents hereof as it describes conditions that one might expect to encounter before, during and after a winter storm event.

7. Adoption. This policy and the accompanying Part B, encompassing standard operating procedures, have been adopted by the Stratham Board of Selectmen.

Approved By:

Selectman, Town of Stratham

Date: _____

Part B:

TOWN OF STRATHAM
Winter Operations
Standard Snow Removal and Ice Control Procedures
(Includes Public Highways, Roads, and Parking Areas)

1. EQUIPMENT and PERSONNEL: The assets available for winter snow removal and ice control are established within the parameters of the annual budget approved by the Town. In formulating the budget, the Town seeks to allocate sufficient funds for this purpose, but variable weather conditions may make budget projections inaccurate. When weather conditions require additional funds beyond those available in the budget, the Town will undertake such actions as are reasonably necessary to address such conditions, but the Town is bound by law to follow certain legal requirements and procedures that may delay the immediate availability of funds for responses. The Highway Department utilizes available assets of the Department as needed to address snow emergencies. A list of the current rolling stock assets is included in Appendix B. The Town of Stratham has 4 full-time personnel available for winter maintenance operations and contracts with independent plowing services for additional plowing as appropriate.

2. ROUTES: Currently, the Town is divided into plow and/or treatment routes. The Town's available equipment is assigned to a plow route as determined by the Road Agent.

The Town uses a backhoe or loader to load trucks during winter operations. This equipment is also used to load snow or push back snow at intersections to create better lines of sight.

Plow routes may be altered from time to time for more efficient snow removal or cost efficiencies. The Road Agent shall notify relevant personnel of such changes. Limited, temporary changes made in accordance with this section do not require approval of the Town Administrator or Board of Selectmen, unless specifically advised to the contrary.

3. MATERIALS: The Town bases its annual budget for snow removal materials in part on past usage and estimated weather forecasts. Sand is used as an abrasive and is applied to the road to improve traction for motor vehicles. Salt is employed as a de-icing and anti-icing agent. The estimated annual supply of sand is purchased each year, mixed with salt and stockpiled inside the Highway Department's storage building. A surplus supply of untreated sand is stored outside the building. Rock salt is purchased as needed, with a limited quantity stockpiled under cover by the Highway Department. Unless weather conditions require a different approach, winter maintenance routes are treated with a mixture of sand and salt, generally with a minimum amount of salt to prevent freezing of the mixture. The mixture may be adjusted according to the nature of the storm with additional salt added if needed. The mixture is applied to the traveled way. At the beginning and at the conclusion of a storm, salt may also be applied to the center of

paved roads where traffic traveling in either direction can work the material. The salt, in conjunction with traffic action, creates a solution intended to assist in melting snow and ice, and resisting snow and ice packing on the roadway. The road crown further assists with the spreading of the mixture. The sand/salt mixture, as well as salt itself, is effective only to approximately 25 degrees Fahrenheit.

4. COMMUNICATIONS: The majority of the Public Works rolling stock is equipped with VHF band radios. Each plow and equipment operator is assigned a unique call number. Radios are also maintained at the Highway Department garage, and each operator may communicate with Newmarket Dispatch and the Town Police and Fire Departments.

5. SCHOOLS:

(A) Maintenance. The School Districts are responsible for clearing of snow and winter treatment of the access roads and parking lots of the Stratham Memorial and Cooperative Middle Schools. On days when school is in session, winter road maintenance efforts are timed to coincide with bus routing and delivery of students to the extent reasonably practicable.

(B) School Cancellation. The School Superintendent, or designated official representative, may contact the Road Agent or Highway Department's designee to determine the condition of the municipality's roads in order to determine the advisability of students using school buses. The school representative(s) shall make the decision to cancel or postpone school for that day.

6. PARKING: The Town may adopted winter parking regulations. One purpose of a winter parking ban is to allow winter maintenance crews unobstructed snow removal and ice control routes, as much as possible, to maintain the maximum effectiveness of their efforts.

7. PLOW ROUTE PRIORITIES: The Highway Department has to assign priorities for winter maintenance route activity in order to maximize the effectiveness of its efforts in accordance with the following:

A. School Bus Routes. School bus routes are given first priority on school days.

B. Public Parking Areas. The public parking area at the Town Office will be plowed and skid resistant material will be applied as needed.

C. Fire Department. The Fire Station property will be plowed by the Highway Department.

D. Transfer Station/Recycling Center. If the facility is open during a storm/winter event, the Highway Department will plow the facility as part of a plow route. If the facility is not open, it will be plowed as conditions and available resources warrant.

8. ROADS AND SIDEWALKS NOT RECEIVING WINTER MAINTENANCE:

The Town of Stratham does not maintain a number of roadways and other areas as part of its winter maintenance activities. The areas not maintained by the Town include:

(A) Private roads, driveways, and sidewalks.

(B) Roads, sidewalks and other areas maintained or within the jurisdiction of State, Federal or other units of government.

9. DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY: The descriptions of immunity and potential liability in this section are not intended to waive any immunity or to extend any liability that may exist under law; but are intended solely for convenience.

(A) The Town of Stratham assumes no responsibility for damage to private property that is located within the public right-of-way as such property is deemed an encumbrance that is not permitted to be located in the right-of-way. The right-of-way is 25' to either side of the center line, and land within the right-of-way may be mistaken by property owners as their own property. In many cases, the right-of-way may extend 10' to 20' either side of the paved or graveled surface of a road. Homeowners sometimes may extend lawns, plant trees or shrubbery, place mailboxes, or erect fences or stonewalls in these areas, which might be intended to improve appearance, but which may obstruct or interfere with maintenance being conducted on the roadway, including winter maintenance.

(B) In the event of property damage occurring as a result of winter maintenance activities conducted by the Town of Stratham, the Town may be held responsible only for damages as allowed by law arising from negligence or other fault properly attributable to the Town. The Town will not be responsible for the repair or replacement of damaged property that is within the public right-of-way or which is the result of negligence or fault attributable to others, whether located on private or public property.

(C) The Town will also not be responsible for damage to any vehicle which may be damaged during winter maintenance if the vehicle is parked in violation of any State law or local regulation, including any winter or snow removal parking limitation periods, or is otherwise improperly or imprudently located or operated.

10. PLACEMENT OF SNOW IN RIGHT-OF-WAY. No snow is to be shoveled, blown, plowed or placed, by any means, onto Town streets or sidewalks or across roadways to the opposite side snow banks, unless it is immediately cleaned up and removed so as to eliminate any hazard or danger to the public or to Town vehicles.

11. ROADWAY OBSTRUCTIONS: If any pedestrian or vehicle or other item interferes with snow removal operations, the Town's personnel will seek the cooperation of the person or the owner of such item to remove it immediately. If the owner cannot be readily located or if the owner refuses to cooperate, the Town vehicle operator shall contact the Town Police Department for assistance. Operators should not attempt to confront owners with regard to such matters.

12. POST STORM OPERATIONS: As determined by the Road Agent, snow banks resulting from previous accumulations may be pushed back, or shelved, using the plow and wing of suitable equipment to make space for future snow storms.

13. SNOW REMOVAL FROM TOWN ROADS: During the initial stages of a storm, Town highways will be plowed and receive surface treatment as appropriate in accordance herewith. As parked vehicles are removed from streets, snow removal equipment may swing wider through the street to push back accumulated snow.

(A) Any vehicles which violate winter parking regulations are subject to ticketing and towing. Any vehicle which otherwise interferes with the reasonable efforts of the Town's winter maintenance is subject to removal, after reasonable attempt to notify the operator, if possible.

(B) Snow removal operations may be delayed or ended in areas where vehicles are improperly parked or where they might interfere with snow removal operations.

(C) The Town is not responsible for damages to such vehicles arising out of winter maintenance operations or as a result of towing.