

## FAQs for Snow Operations

### **How does the City conduct plowing operations and what is the main objective/priority?**

During a storm event the primary objective is to keep main roadways as safe and accessible as possible. To accomplish this, the snow is plowed from the travel lanes to the side of the roadway as efficiently as possible beginning with the highest priority routes. During significant snow events the large amount of snow that is plowed from the roadways creates a snow berm along the side of the roadway. Driveways and sidewalks are often affected by snow berms as plowing occurs. This is an unavoidable part of the snow plowing process. The City does not remove the berms from driveways or sidewalks.

### **How can I request to have the level of priority increased for my street?**

Contact Reno Direct to request to have the name of your street placed on a list to be considered for higher priority. During the annual process of updating the Snow and Ice Control Plan, Public Works will review the requests that were received during the year and consider priority adjustments as appropriate.

We encourage you to contact your Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB) with your concerns. A meeting is scheduled each fall with each NAB to discuss the Snow and Ice Control Plan and issues pertaining to it. We encourage you to attend this meeting to provide input.

### **What is the procedure to help seniors, disabled, or individuals with medical issues to get to medical appointments, receive medical attention, or if just stranded?**

Residents should call 9-1-1 for medical emergencies. Public Works does work in partnership with agencies in emergency services to ensure access for emergency responders.

Non-emergency appointments should be rescheduled. Residents can also make arrangements for transportation (i.e. friends, family, neighbors, cab companies, shuttle services, and RTC).

### **When I request a call back from a Public Works supervisor or manager, what is the procedure and what should I expect?**

The caller's contact information and issue will be taken and routed to Public Works. Please be advised that Public Works is handling the current storm event and it is difficult for them to return all phone calls, but they will make every effort to address all concerns.

### **Why hasn't my street been plowed or sanded yet?**

Plow operators will plow and/or sand on main roadways (priority 1) until those streets are clear and safe. The operators then continue into the collector streets (priority 2) until those streets are passable with one lane in and one lane out. Once the collector streets (priority 2) have been addressed, operators will then go back and clear those streets by widening them to more than one lane in and one lane out. Crews will then begin plowing residential areas (priority 3 & 4) as conditions and resources allow. Priority is given to the routes with the most snow accumulations first.

**What happens to my request after I call for service?**

All calls and service requests are forwarded to the on-duty supervisors and addressed as resources and conditions allow. Please remember that Public Works is following a plan to be the most effective and efficient during snow operations.

**I live on a cul-de-sac and want to know if cul-de-sacs are plowed?**

Following the Snow & Ice Plan (priorities) cul-de-sacs will be plowed if the snow plow can access the cul-de-sac safely.

**Can the large piles of snow on the side of the road be removed?**

Due to limited resources, snow piles are generally not removed unless they are creating a hazard.

**Can the large amount of snow that is left in the center lane be removed?**

The objective is to clear travel lanes for traffic so the roadways are passable. Center lanes will not necessarily be plowed unless they are creating a hazard.

**Why is there only one travel lane in each direction being cleared?**

Plowing one lane in and one lane out provides emergency access and allows the plows to cover many more miles during storm events making them much more effective.

**What about the berm that was left in front of my driveway?**

During significant snow events the large amount of snow that is plowed from the roadways creates a snow berm along the side of the roadway. Driveways and sidewalks are often affected by snow berms as plowing occurs. This is an unavoidable part of the snow plowing process. Residents are responsible to clear the berms that block their driveway. The City does not have the resources to clear berms from every driveway.

**What about the snow that was pushed on to the already shoveled sidewalk?**

When plowing the streets snow is plowed to the side of the road which sometimes includes getting snow on sidewalks. The drivers make every attempt not to push snow on sidewalks but sometimes it is unavoidable. The City does not have the resources to remove snow from sidewalks.

**Why do I see plows that are driving with their plows up?**

There are times when the operators must have the plows up. For example, the snow has bonded to the roadway and the plow is unable to remove the ice; the operator is conducting sanding operations at intersections, curves, bridges, and inclines; or the operator is returning to the yard for materials. Please keep in mind that the crews are following a plan to be the most effective and efficient during snow operations.

**How does the City use sand/salt (i.e. end of the streets, grades, prior to storm, etc)?**

Sand/salt is utilized to improve traction and to speed up the melting process. Sand/salt is primarily used at intersections, inclines, curves and bridges. Sand/salt is generally applied after plowing when ice is present on the roadway. The City also uses a product called Ice Slicer to pre-treat some bridges and inclines prior to a significant storm.

**How often is the Snow Plan updated and what is the process?**

The snow plan is updated each fall. Public Works begins the updating process by conducting meetings with plow operators to gather input and suggestions regarding the previous season. A supervisor is also assigned to drive each snow route and review the route for any changes in traffic volume, grades, etc. Public Works then communicates with each NAB for input, concerns or suggestions. Additionally, discussions with police and fire occur to ensure any new needs are met and addressed. After all input and suggestions have been received, Public Works makes the appropriate changes to the annual plan. The final version of the Snow and Ice Control Plan is then presented to the Reno City Council for review and approval.

**How many plows/staff are working on snow operations?**

The City of Reno has 22 trucks that are mounted with plows and/or sand spreaders. Every effort is made to fully staff each storm with all available resources. During large events, crews are scheduled to work 24 hours a day on 2 twelve hour shifts.

**Why would a street not be cleared down to pavement?**

During large, cold snow storms once bonding occurs, we may not be able to effectively plow snow due to safety hazards (i.e. tears up equipment, roadways, or possible hazards to driver). During these times crews may only be able to apply salt/sand to roadways to improve traction.

**What occurs when the weather changes and it starts snowing during snow operations?**

At anytime if the weather changes and it starts snowing during operations, crews must go back to the arterial and collector streets (priority 1 and 2) to start clearing them again. This means crews start working the plan from the beginning.