

FAQ's for Snow and Ice Storm Events

What is the City Snow-Plow Policy?

Current policy:

Snow Removal Policies - View the City of Camas Snow Route map at <http://www.ci.camasa.wa.us/pworks/street.htm> . The City has three snowplows with solid deicer and sand capabilities along with two liquid deicing units to maintain approximately 45 miles of priority routes and 75 miles of residential streets. The City has identified the main transportation corridors and has prioritized the routes based on emergency service response and maintaining priority transportation routes. All other streets will be serviced as further resources become available to provide relief to the crews all ready on duty. Plow crews will respond to emergencies in neighborhoods if dispatched by police or fire. The City will tow abandoned vehicles that, in the opinion of the City, pose a danger to the mobility of the emergency routes. The following roads are closed by the City during inclement weather; NW Forest Home Rd. from NW 10th Ave. to NW Astor St., Division St. from NE 6th to NE 11th, NE Dallas St. from NE 6th to NE 14th, NW Dahlia Dr. from NW 31st Ave. to NW 34th Cr., NW Lacamas Lane from NW Norwood St. to NW Lake Rd.

Be prepared – City crews will not be able to plow all the roads to maintain full transportation mobility. Citizens are responsible to prepare for extended delays during weather events, especially if you live on steep neighborhood streets. The best policy is to stay put! There is always the likelihood that you may be without water and/or power during a storm, so always have a supply of food and water on hand. If you have to travel during these times, be prepared for winter driving (have a vehicle with 4 wheel drive, studs or chains, and carry a car safety kit). **Please do not park on priority routes as it makes removal of snow and ice more difficult. Most importantly, know your driving limitations.**

Why doesn't the City plow our neighborhood (side) streets during the storm?

During a storm, the City's limited number of plows and employees are fully utilized to maintain priority routes in a passable condition for emergency vehicle mobility City wide. All other streets will be serviced as crews become available during regularly scheduled shifts in order to reduce overtime costs. Since each storm is unique, the effects on the streets are prioritized by City staff for each event, and neighborhood streets are plowed considering the ability of the plows to be effective, the safety of the plow driver, and the routes for school buses and sanitation pick-up.

How will emergency vehicles get to my home?

Street crews are in constant contact with both police and fire during an inclement weather event. Plows will be dispatched to assist emergency vehicle access into neighborhoods for emergency response.

My sidewalk is covered with snow and ice; will the City clear it off?

No, by City Ordinance (CMC 12.04.020) it is the homeowner's responsibility to clear the sidewalk adjacent to their property.

Where can I find up-to-date information on snow response and garbage pickup for my neighborhood?

During an event, the most up-to-date information is on the City of Camas web site at www.ci.camasa.wa.us. During regular working hours (M-F, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) you can call 817-1560 for current information.

Why did the plow go by my house with the blade up?

There are many reasons a plow operator may have the blade up. Responding to an emergency call, equipment malfunction, operator judgment that plowing will be ineffective or make things worse, operator safety, using chains to break up the ice coating to allow for future plowing are just a few of the reasons.

Our street is right off the main road, it would take just a minute to swing in and get our street plowed. Why don't they plow our street?

During a storm, the limited number of plows and employees are fully utilized to maintain the priority routes in good condition for Citywide emergency vehicle mobility. If crews start doing side streets, it is our 30 year experience that we can very quickly lose the priority roads thus impairing emergency response and general mobility. When wrecks occur or cars are abandoned on the main routes it becomes extremely difficult to reopen the main routes.

What products does the City use on the roadways during a snow or ice storm and are they corrosive?

Prior to a storm when the road surface temperature falls below 38 degrees, the City may apply a liquid de-icer (Magnesium Chloride) to the main arterials. This product helps reduce the formation of ice and will speed the melting process after the storm. The City may also apply a solid de-icer on the main arterial hills. Due to the expense and corrosive nature of salt, this treatment option is used sparingly. As a last resort, the City may also apply sand. All de-icing products can be corrosive to vehicles. We recommend that you wash your vehicle after major storms. The City of Camas works to minimize the amount of product applied while still maintaining effectiveness.

When you plowed our neighborhood, the City left a bank of snow in front of our driveway. When will they remove it?

The City can not clear individual driveways. Plow operators make every attempt to minimize the plow impacts but must continue to plow the other neighborhoods.

I'm trapped in my home and can't get out. I need to pick up prescriptions and food – I'm out of both. Can someone plow my street?

The City will not plow the residential streets outside of the snow policy. Citizens are responsible to be prepared for being home bound during extended periods. Network with friends, neighbors, and organizations for support. If you feel it is an emergency, call 911.