

Snow & Ice Policy

1) INTRODUCTION:

Birch Lake Township believes that it is in the best interest of the residents of the Township to assume basic responsibility for control of snow and ice on Township roads. Reasonable ice and snow control is necessary for routine travel and emergency services. Birch Lake Township will provide such control in a safe and cost-effective manner and will use private contractors to provide this service.

2) INITIATION OF SNOW AND ICE CONTROL OPERATIONS

The Supervisor in charge of roads will decide to begin snow and ice control operations. The criteria for that decision are:

- a. Snow accumulation of 3 inches or more;
- b. Drifting of snow that causes problems for travel;
- c. Icy conditions which seriously affect travel;
- d. Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use of roads.

3) MANNER OF SNOWPLOWING

Snow will be plowed in a manner as to minimize any traffic obstructions. One lane of traffic will first be plowed with the snow discharged to the right-of-way/ditch area. Then the other lane of travel will be plowed in the same manner. In times of extreme snowfall, roads will not always immediately be able to be completely cleared of snow.

4) PRIORITIES AND SCHEDULE OF SNOWPLOWING

The Township has classified township roads based on the road's function, location, traffic volume and importance to the welfare of the residents. Those roads classified and **SNOW PLOW ROUTES** will be plowed first. These are high volume travel routes that provide access for emergency and school bus services.

- a. Priority 1 Roads: All township roads except Minimum Maintenance Roads and roads with only seasonal residents.
- b. Priority 2 Roads: Those roads providing access to Minimum Maintenance roads and low volume or seasonal residential areas.

5) WEATHER CONDITIONS

Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of the equipment operator and the equipment. Factors that may delay snow and ice control operations include, but limited to: severe cold; significant winds; and limited visibility.

6) USE OF SAND AND SALT

The township will use sand and/or salt when there is considered to be hazardous ice or slippery conditions. The township is concerned about the effect of salt on the environment and will limit its use for that reason.

7) STANDARDS AND POLICIES

- a. All township roads shall be open within 48 hours of completion of a winter storm.
- b. Priority 1 roads will be plowed first.
- c. Snowplowing equipment will not operate under poor visibility and severe blowing snow conditions.
- d. Plowing of priority 2 roads, winging and storm clean-up shall normally only be accomplished during daylight hours.
- e. Mailboxes damaged during snow removal will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Only those mailboxes that are properly built and installed in a location in accordance with Minnesota Department of Transportation Standards and which were damaged by actual contact with contracted plow will be repaired at the township expense. Damage caused by flying snow or ice shall be the responsibility of the mailbox owner.
- f. Priority 1 roads shall be sanded on hills, curves and intersections as determined by the Road Supervisor.

8) DRIVEWAY SNOW REMOVAL

MN Statute 160.2715

Residents are cautioned that it is **UNLAWFUL** to plow snow from driveways onto or across any public roadway. Piles of snow left on or near the roadway can freeze into a solid mass creating hazardous conditions for both residents and the plowing contractor. Because of those dangers, fines may be levied against those not following the law.