

# City of Alpena

## News Release of March 8, 2022



### Snow-Plowing Safety

During and after inclement weather events, the City receives many calls and questions regarding the plowing and clearing of snow on the City streets, parking lots, and sidewalks.

The City assembled a list of frequently asked questions that can be found on the City website [www.alpena.mi.us/index.php](http://www.alpena.mi.us/index.php) under the “Quick Links” tab. The list is updated from time to time to address new concerns as brought to the attention of the City.

By nature, snow plowing takes place during less than ideal weather conditions. Also, clean-up from snow storms often happens during the daylight hours with heavier traffic and unexpected obstacles. When snow continues throughout the day, road conditions can deteriorate quickly leaving plow drivers with a daunting task and extended hours. Snow plows can weigh as much as 30 tons, they make wide turns, will back up frequently, and can overlap lanes when clearing the center area of the street. For these reasons and more, drivers should slow down, safely move away from the centerline, and take their foot off the accelerator. Also, remember, if you cannot see the snow plow’s mirror, the plow driver cannot see you. For your safety, always assume the driver cannot see you. Most snowplow / passenger vehicle crashes occur when a passenger vehicle hits a snowplow from behind, or while attempting to pass. Plow blades can completely tear apart a smaller vehicle and cause great bodily harm.

Additionally, plow trucks will back up to turn around and return the way they came to clear both sides of the road. Plows must back up to finish the second pass on most roadways.

The “Michigan Move Over” law indicates state, county and local snow plows have the same rights as emergency vehicles. This means plows have the right of way at stop signs and red lights, when it is safe to do so. It is best to give plow drivers space; the recommended and preferred distance is 10 car lengths.

Finally, it is not illegal to pass a plow truck, but it is risky. The plow driver may be driving slowly, but often you are better off following the plow because the road ahead of them hasn’t been plowed yet. The snow plows are on the road to help you and keep you safe. Leave home a few minutes early when you need to get somewhere. When you are rushed, you are rushed and may become impatient. Please leave for your destination a few minutes early when you need to travel in inclement weather.

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