

The Townsend Highway Department is pleased to issue “A Resident’s Guide to Winter Snow Removal Operations and Procedures”. The intent of this pamphlet is to advise Townsend residents of the Highway Department’s winter snow plowing and sanding objectives and to obtain your assistance so that town roads can be restored to “normal conditions” as promptly as possible after a winter storm. Your cooperation is essential if the Highway Department is to achieve this objective. With your assistance and patience, we will be able to provide you with the important functions of our winter maintenance operation i.e., *get roads open, keep traffic flowing and restore roads to safe traveling conditions quickly.* We at the Highway Department thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Jim Smith  
Highway Superintendent

### Winter Parking Ban

Annually, on November 1<sup>st</sup>, the Town’s winter parking ban goes into effect and continues through April 1<sup>st</sup>. This ban prohibits the parking of motor vehicles on any public way at any time during the above stated time periods. This parking ban allows the Highway Department to plow and open roads in a more efficient and timely manner.

### Illegally Parked Vehicles

Illegally parked vehicles are the biggest obstacles to effectively removing snow from the roadway. Vehicles that violate the winter parking ban will be ticketed by the police and carry a \$15.00 fine. Vehicles that directly hamper Highway Department snow removal efforts will be ticketed and towed at the owner’s expense. Your cooperation with the parking ban will be greatly appreciated.



Questions regarding parking restrictions should be referred to either the Townsend Police Department or Townsend Highway Department. You may contact Highway Department Monday through Friday, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. at 597-1712.

### Snow Plowing Operations

The following is a general description of Townsend’s snow removal plan. As you are aware each storm is different, but we try to follow our snow removal policy as closely as possible. **Our Snow & Ice Removal Program entails three (3) steps:**

1. **The Beginning of a Snow Storm**
2. **During the Snow Storm**
3. **Following the Snow Storm**

#### **Step One**

When a snowstorm begins, the Highway Department responds by sanding and salting the main roads, hills and bus routes. Sanding these roadways serves two main purposes: it prevents the snow from bonding and compacting to the pavement and it keeps traffic moving. Six sanding trucks are used for this operation.

Residents can pick up free sand at the entrance to the Highway Garage.

#### **Step Two**

Plowing operations begin when at least two (2) inches of snow accumulates on the ground. Eleven Highway Department vehicles are equipped for plowing and eight to ten private contractors may be called in to assist with snow removal operations. Each vehicle is assigned to pre-determined routes and will remain in this pattern until the storm subsides. The main objective “during” the snowstorm is to keep roadways passable. At the end of the storm, the plows begin to widen out all roads by pushing back the amassed snow to the edge of the pavement.

Residents may want to wait until the roads have been widened out before clearing the entrance of their driveways. If snow needs to be pushed back further due to heavy build-up on the side of the road, the Highway Department has three (3) days after a storm in which to do so.

Please be advised that snow must not be shoveled or plowed “back into the street” from a resident’s driveway (Town Bylaw, Article 2, Section 18). This creates a hazard to traffic and requires our staff to return to clean it up at the resident’s expense. This action could also result in a \$50.00 fine.

The Highway Department staff are well trained and dedicated to plow “around the clock”, if necessary, keeping the roads open and passable. If a plow truck is riding with its’ plow up, please do not be misled. They may be returning to the garage for fuel or repairs. Please be advised that Route 119 is maintained by the Mass. Highway Dept.

Residents should not be concerned if they do not see their roadway plowed during the early part of a snowstorm. The Highway Department follows an assigned route plan where main roads and hills are plowed first. Just please be patient, all Town owned roads will eventually be plowed.

Another area of concern is mailboxes. We do not “deliberately” knock over or damage mailboxes. Most mailboxes are not damaged by the vehicle itself but by the snow that is thrown from the plow. But, at times, with the combination of reduced visibility during a snow storm and snow banks, it is not always possible for our drivers to see a mailbox in time to avoid it. Remember, anything installed within the town’s right-of-way (i.e., fence, mailbox, etc.) is placed there at the owner’s risk. Hence, residents are encouraged to place mailboxes at the maximum allowable distance from the pavement. Please be aware that the Highway Department **does not** reimburse for mailboxes damaged during snow plowing operations. Mailboxes should be inspected

regularly to insure that they are secured properly and that wood posts are not rotted out.

An additional dilemma that is of concern is basketball hoops that border town roads. Please be aware that in accordance with Townsend General Bylaws, Article II, Section 8, **all basketball hoops bordering town ways must be removed for the time period November 30 until April 1.** A fine of twenty (\$20.00) dollars will be imposed on the owner if the basketball hoop is not removed. These hoops are tough to see when it is snowing and are capable of snagging our plow trucks. In the event that this happens and damage is caused to the vehicle, the owner may be held responsible for the damage. So **“please”** take the time to remove or turn around the portion that hangs over the road. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

### Step Three

Once the snowfall has stopped and all roads are cleared of snow, post-storm sanding and salting commences. All roads are again sanded and salted to improve traction and melt the remaining snow and ice.

### Residents Can Help

Residents can assist the Highway Department during a snowstorm by heeding these suggestions:

1. Observe all winter parking bans.
2. Reduce your speed and drive cautiously.
3. Remain off the road during snowstorms unless absolutely necessary.
4. Do not allow children to make snow forts at edge of road.
5. Do not plow, blow or throw snow back into the roadway.

6. Before final cleanup of your driveway, check the road. If it does not appear to be widened out, a wing plow will return to plow again, and may push snow back into the entrance of your driveway. Doing this might keep you from clearing your driveway more than once.
7. During plowing operations some lawns will inadvertently be torn up. To help keep this from occurring, we recommend installing reflectors at the edge of your lawn as a guide for our plow operators. If lawn sprinkler systems are installed please keep them away from the edge of the road. The Highway Department is not responsible for repairing lawns or fixing or replacing lawn sprinklers if damaged during snow plowing operations. Be aware that if you do decide to install sprinklers near the edge of the road, they could be on town property. Most town right-of-ways are forty feet (40') wide.
8. Finally, please have patience. Snow plowing is a time consuming and arduous job covering approximately 100 miles of road. Some residents will have their roads plowed first and some will be last, but all town roads will be cleared.

The Highway Department is devoted to providing the residents with dependable snow removal in the shortest time possible. With your cooperation we will all benefit during a snowstorm.

If you have any questions concerning the snow removal policy, please call (978) 597-1712. We will try to assist you in any way possible.

## TOWN OF TOWNSEND HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

### WINTER SNOW POLICY

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