

Plowing Operations

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How do you determine if plows will be sent out for clean-up of City roads?

Answer: The City's Public Works Department watches the weather, monitors road temperatures, and evaluates current conditions to determine the appropriate operation.

Question: How many plows does the City have?

Answer: The city has 37 plow trucks with wing plows, 7 loaders with wing plows and 2 smaller plow trucks for alleys.

Question: How long will it take to finish plowing all the streets?

Answer: Once the snow has stopped, a general plowing operation of all 1,067 lane miles will take between 8-12 hours to complete. In addition to the streets, there are 100 alleys (approximately 10 miles worth) and over 280 cul-de-sacs to plow.

Question: Why has my street not been plowed?

Answer: During a storm, crews will be out working. They start with main streets, hills, intersections, bus routes, railroad crossings and school areas. Once those are cleaned, they move on to flat streets, cul-de-sacs and alleyways. The crews will get to all the areas. Please be patient.

Question: Why can't the plows keep the snow out of the end of driveways?

Answer: The City is made up of 1,067 lane miles that have to be cleared. The City's priority is the safety of the traveling public and clearing the roads of snow and ice by pushing it off the road and shoulders is necessary. While plow drivers try to minimize the amount of snow that gets plowed into driveways during a storm, it is the responsibility of the property owner to clear their driveway opening. Unfortunately, the snow plow drivers will not lift or turn their plows as they pass each driveway. Doing this would cause there to be a large pile of snow in the road. It would also be impractical as plow drivers would never finish clearing all the roads due to the number of driveways in the City.

Question: Why is the plow truck back? I cleared out my driveway when they went through the first time, and now I have more snow at the end of my driveway.

Answer: Most residential streets in the City require 4 total passes before they are complete (2 passes on each side of the road). On the first pass on one side of the road the driver plows the middle of the road to about 2-3 feet from the curb. On the second pass, the driver plows as close as they can to the curb. It takes these two passes on each side to get the entire roadway clean.

Question: It's a snowstorm. Should I put my garbage/recycling can out if they are plowing?

Answer: Generally, you can assume that garbage/recycling will be picked up on the normal schedule, even if it is snowing. If you can, try to avoid putting your garbage/recycling can out for collection the night before if plows will be out during the night. When you place your can, please make sure that your



can is out of the roadway and is accessible (snow is not piled right in front of the can). In the unfortunate incident that the can is knocked over, residents are asked to put the can upright. If there are any cancellations or changes to garbage/recycling service a notice will go out on the City's [Facebook](#)/[Twitter](#) pages. A notice will also be placed on the homepage of the [City website](#) and on the [garbage/recycling page](#) on the City website.

Question: Why won't the plow driver plow closer to my mailbox?

Answer: The plow drivers try to get as close to the edge of the road as possible to make sure that the roadway is passable and clear. However, as the plow truck has a large wing plow on the side, they must be careful not to get too close to mailboxes. If the plow driver approaches too close to mailboxes, the mailbox could be damaged or knocked over. Due to the inability of the plow to get too close to mailboxes there is sometimes snow left near a mailbox that is the homeowners responsibility to clear.

Question: The plow truck hit my mailbox. What do I do?

Answer: Mailboxes are occasionally knocked down during snow removal operations. If the City plow truck hit your mailbox, you must report it within 10 days to the Public Works Department at 262-524-3600 or by using our [Service Request Portal](#). The City will then investigate the damage and follow the steps in the City's "[Damage to Mailboxes by City Snow Plows](#)" policy.

Before the winter season each year, residents are encouraged to make sure their mailbox is winter ready. Residents should prepare mailboxes by tightening screws and ensuring the post and receptacle are secure enough to endure large amounts of thrown snow.

Question: I live at the end of a cul-de-sac. Why does all the snow from the whole street get dumped there?

Answer: There are over 280 cul-de-sacs that are plowed by the City. In cul-de-sacs, the City does need to pile snow on the street to limit the snow from going into driveways. The snow is piled in such a location as to avoid fire hydrants, driveways, mailboxes, catch basins, and utilities.

When time allows following a storm, the Public Work's crews will prioritize hauling out snow from the cul-de-sacs where there is no room for additional snow or where the snow is impacting safety.

Question: My only option is to park on the street. Why can't the driver avoid plowing in my car?

Answer: Even though there are cars parked on the street, the plows must clear the traffic lanes of each of the streets. Unfortunately, for those who park on the street, as the plows pass the snow gets pushed up against the cars.

Residents are encouraged to park off the street if possible. If residents must park on the street, the plow drivers ask that cars not park across from each other. You are encouraged to stagger cars or park on only one side of the road.

Question: Why can't I place snow from my driveway into the street? Won't the plow driver just plow it away when they come through?

Answer: Blowing or placing snow into the City roadway is a violation of the [City ordinance](#). It is a safety hazard as these patches of snow placed by residents can freeze and pose concerns for motorists. In addition, extra snow placed onto the roadway makes it more difficult for the plows to clear the roadway.

Question: What happens during a City snow emergency?

Answer: During an extreme weather event or immediately after, the City may declare a [snow emergency](#) to be able to more effectively clear the roadways. During the snow emergency, vehicles are not to be parked on City streets. Residents are notified of a snow emergency through the City's [Facebook/Twitter](#) pages, [City website](#), and local news channels.

Question: Why are the alleys not plowed like the roadways?

Answer: There are 100 alleys in the City which is the equivalent of approximately 10 miles. As alleys are narrower than a normal street, a different truck is required for alleys than what is used on the roads. The City utilizes two smaller plow trucks for alleys that have a front 10' plow.

In order to get to every alley, the primary objective of the snow plow driver is to make one pass through the alley. With the only the plow on the front of the truck, due to the narrow alleys, the entrances to alleys are not rounded. As time allows, crews will come back later after a storm to clear corners.

Question: Why do plow trucks come back the day after the storm and move snow? Isn't that a waste of time?

Answer: During a storm, the main priority for a plow driver is to clear the driving lanes. A day or days after a storm, plow drivers are often out on the roads for clean-up. Clean-up often involves moving large piles of snow, clearing shoulders, or pushing back snow on the edges of the roadway. These are important operations to make sure the City roadways are ready for the next snowfall. If snow is allowed to pile up too high, it could limit visibility, cause safety concerns, and make it more difficult to clear the roads during the next storm.

Question: I see the plow trucks come back after a storm and remove snow piles. Where is the snow taken to?

Answer: The City does haul snow away from some locations in the City after a storm including from downtown, cul-de-sacs and parking lots. The City utilizes multiple locations to dump snow. The main location is the Hoover Avenue Dump site and the parking lot behind Fire Station #5. The snow piles are always dumped on a hard surface so the crew can collect and remove any debris left in spring.

