

WESTON COUNTY ROAD & BRIDGE

Snow Removal Policy

Our policy is to keep the roads open, safe, and usable for all drivers, to the extent that we possibly can. The following plan covers the procedures Weston County Road & Bridge will follow during the winter months for snow removal. Any of these operations may be altered at the discretion of the Road & Bridge Department depending on conditions and/or available resources.

Our priorities are the more highly traveled roads and the main arteries, such as established school bus routes and mail routes. We start early in the morning and try to get as many roads plowed as early as possible. On most days we plow snow all through the day. We are not a 24/7 establishment and we cannot work around the clock. The Road & Bridge Department will determine whether snow removal operations are necessary outside the normal scheduled work hours. The normal scheduled work week is Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM – 4:30 PM, excluding holidays.

When there is significant snowfall and high winds develop, we are not able, at times, to keep all the roads open. There are situations where, in just 10 or 15 minutes, the road goes from freshly plowed to again impassable. In such instances, the decision may be made by the Road & Bridge Department to suspend all plowing operations, until the wind/storm diminishes, and actual progress can again be realized in keeping the roads open. Even when that happens, we try to keep school transportation departments notified so children can return home safely.

We do not respond to calls from people who become stuck and want help getting out, or who want a ride to their destination. We do not provide towing, or remove stuck vehicles from roadways. You are responsible to know the weather conditions that may impact these county roads. You must use your judgement on the weather conditions and whether you and the vehicle you're in possess the skills to traverse the road. With that in mind, the decision and responsibility for winter travel falls to the individual. Our purpose is and must be to open the roads in a safe manner.

We often receive complaints from those living along county roads who say that our clearing the drifts from the road results in their driveway approaches being filled with snow. Unfortunately, that does happen, and when using a V-plow or trying to move as much snow as possible downwind in order to keep the roads open, the result may be snow in driveways. If we were to stop and plow out every driveway along every county road, it would take us several days longer to cover the whole county with the plows. That makes it unfeasible to do so. The other option would be to not plow the section of road in front of their driveway, but then they would still be blocked in. So we have to deal with several hundred miles of drifted and blocked county roads, and they may have to deal with the 3 or 4 feet at the end of their driveway.

We cannot go outside of our county right of way or across pipelines to make a winter road. Bottom line, the county will not plow private drives or roads of any kind.

If private landowners or businesses are removing snow from their private approaches, we prefer that they push the snow onto their own property. If you push snow onto the county road after we have plowed it, we are not responsible for plowing it again. If an emergency arises where snow must be plowed before we can get to it, we ask that you try to coordinate with us beforehand and try not to tear up the road, or remove gravel along with the snow.

On occasion, too, there are legitimate emergency situations where access to a county road is a must, such as those who become lost or have various medical needs. The Road & Bridge is committed to doing all we can to assist in such critical matters, whenever they arise. We would encourage people in the area, especially those considerable distances from town, or those who live on less traveled county or state roads, to give thought to keeping on hand adequate supplies of food, medicine and prescriptions, propane, livestock feed, and other daily essentials. It may be prudent to stock up on such items at times when the weather and the road conditions are good for travel.

Finally, when Emergency Management issues a travel advisory, or asks people to eliminate unnecessary travel and to just stay home, that advice should be heeded carefully. The Road & Bridge Department will work together with local law enforcement and other agencies to keep the public advised of current conditions and at times when the plowing is suspended until conditions improve, the public will be made aware of it. People need to weigh carefully if driving in such conditions is really necessary, and if it is worth the risk.

If you have an emergency situation, call **911 immediately**.