

Questions and Concerns about City Snow Plowing

Winter in Wisconsin means snow and cold temperatures - it happens every year.

And every time it snows, crews from the City of Lake Mills are dispatched to clean it up.

The goal of the Lake Mills Street Department snow plowing crew is to provide safe travel. This is done by moving as much snow as soon as possible from city streets as quickly as possible.

Lake Mills crews constantly monitor weather reports to be ready to respond properly to each snow event. Crews typically do not begin plowing operation unless or until 2 inches of snow have fallen. Depending on the weather forecast, crews will determine the most strategic and effective time to begin plowing or salting operations. Crews continue to plow until all snow is removed from every street throughout the entire city.



Lake Mills has a “curb to curb” policy for snow plowing; this means snow is moved from the entire width of the street. This approach ensures streets are safer by allowing normal traffic flow. Additionally, when the snow melts, it is directed to storm sewer catch basins to reduce the chances of flooding and icy areas in the road.

Removing snow is always hard work and a lot of hassle for residents and city plow drivers. Hopefully, by understanding what city snow plow crews do, we can better work together to make things a little easier for everyone.

Mailboxes & Snow Removal

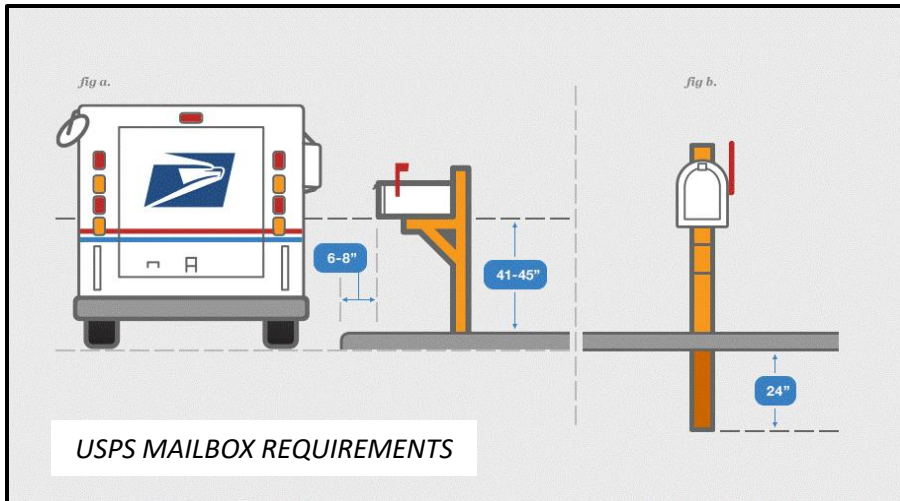
The Department of Public Works strives to provide prompt and professional snow plowing services to the residents. On occasion, mailboxes will be damaged during snowplowing activities.

Snow is heavy, even if it's just a few inches, and snow coming off a plow usually includes packed snow and ice caused by vehicle traffic. The design of a snowplow is to remove the snow and force it to the side of the road, much of which is airborne.

An inadequately constructed and installed mailbox is no match for the enormous weight of the snow and ice coming off the plow. Using a very sturdy mailbox and mailbox post will help. An internet search will direct you to a number of inexpensive products that can also help protect your mailbox.

When it can be reasonably shown that direct physical contact between the snowplow and the mailbox occurred, the city may reimburse the homeowner up to \$30 for the cost of repair or replacement. However, the city has no control over the weight of the ice and snow.

Consequently, when the damage is from the weight of the snow coming off the plow, no reimbursement will be made.



Keep in mind that mailboxes must be placed according to United States Postal Service regulations. Mailboxes that are not in compliance with these regulations will not be eligible for reimbursement.

Frequently asked questions (FAQ), typical concerns, and the City's response

Why is there a pile of snow in my driveway?

Snowplow operations require snow to be pushed off roadways in smooth continuous passes. Snow plows typically leave snow at the end of driveways as they clear the roadways due to excess snow dispersed from the blade. This is the normal result of plowing snow from streets.

It is ineffective and cost prohibitive to lift the blade at every driveway in the city. The city cannot and will not adjust the placement of snow based on individual property owner requests.

It is the property owner's responsibility to clear the snow from the bottom of the driveway. To minimize the amount of snow a plow moves into a driveway, residents can consider piling snow on the left side of the driveway (when facing the house). In addition, consider clearing an area on the terrace on the right side of the driveway to allow some of the snow from the blade to deposit on the terrace before the driveway. This will help reduce the amount of snow that is pushed off the plow blade into driveway.

So, what do I do with the snow in my driveway?

First, if possible, consider waiting until your entire street is plowed and the snow has stopped falling before clearing your driveway. This may not be possible for every resident, but it does allow for removing snow only once. Once plowing operations have been completed, snow should be placed on the terrace or your front lawn. Do not put the snow back in the street. Fines can be imposed for putting snow in city streets.

Why do I have more snow in driveway than my neighbor?

City crews have no control over how much snow goes in each driveway – plow drivers do not purposely try to put more snow in one driveway over another. Unfortunately, driveways that are near an intersection or on cul-de-sacs may get more snow because these areas have more street surface. Consequently, more snow will come off the blade.

You plow too close to the curb!

The City plows “curb to curb” to help clean the stormwater catch basins. This provides a safer street for vehicles, and allows the water resulting from melting snow and rain events to drain. This prevents streets from flooding. Clearing streets curb to curb also allows the post office easier access to curbside mailboxes.

Your driver was going too fast. Slow down!

The speed of the snowplow depends on the amount and weight of the snow; snow resists the forward movement of the plow. It is necessary to have enough speed to spread the snow when it leaves the plow blade. If the plow moves too slowly, a high snow bank is formed that blocks the curb and gutter, driveways, and vision. Additionally, crews must plan for future snow falls requiring plowing. An existing high snow bank impedes subsequent plowing requiring even greater speed to move the snow up and over the existing snow bank.

Stop putting your snow on my sidewalk!

Please understand, it is not our snow - we're simply working to remove it from the road so people can continue to travel. Typically, we try to keep snow on the terrace, but sometimes the terrace is too narrow or there is too much snow to be contained in this area. We suggest, if possible, wait until plowing operations are completed or please understand that it may require removing snow from the sidewalk more than once for each snow event. Fines can be imposed for putting snow in city streets.

