

# **CITY OF OURAY**



## **Snow Plowing and Removal Policy**



**Updated August 28th, 2019**

## **Background**

The City of Ouray provides snow plowing/removal City wide including the parking areas on Main Street. It has been established that as a general rule the crew will begin plowing activities when measureable snow fall accumulation reaches 4” in depth.

The intent of this policy statement is not to undo or question the procedures that have been largely followed in terms of snow removal, but rather to establish, in writing, a cohesive summary of the procedures that are followed, and guidance for staff in the exercise of decisions related to snow removal.

## **Policy**

### Commencement of Snowplowing

Snow plowing commences upon an accumulation of 4” of snow within the City. If the snow is wet and heavy, snow plowing should commence upon the accumulation of 3”. The following caveats are to be noted:

- There is no qualification as to where the measurement occurs. An accumulation that reaches these thresholds, anywhere within the City boundaries, should be sufficient to trigger the work. Discretion must obviously be exercised in those instances where snow fall may be heavy in one side of the City, and not the other (plowing may be justified only in the area receiving heavy accumulation). The purpose for the threshold criteria is to establish a general standard which will be applicable in most cases.
- In those instances where heavy accumulations are expected, discretion should also be exercised as to when to commence snowplowing. It may be advantageous to commence plowing prior to the accumulation of 4” in order to avoid large accumulations during heavy storms and rapidly accumulating snow.
- As a general rule, the staff will commence plowing at anytime accumulations should warrant. Main Street snow removal will commence at 2:00 AM.

### Notification of large snow accumulations after business hours

Should the accumulation occur after business hours (8-4:30, Monday through Friday), and is heavy enough to have significant impact upon the community, on-call public works staff shall be notified accordingly. As a general matter, such notification should occur by the on-duty Police Officer, but it could occur through other City staff or officials. The Public Works Director should be attempted first, with the Street Foreman as backup, who will in turn call out other Public Works employees as necessary to assist.

### Priority of Streets & Sidewalks

The City Crew is responsible for snow removal from the parking areas on Main Street; they also clear the sidewalks on Main Street from 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This work is performed between 2 and 8 AM.

Snowplowing of streets, as a general matter, focuses first on school streets and streets in and around City Hall (this includes Emergency Services and the Fire Department), then the core area of the City, which includes from 3<sup>rd</sup> avenue to 10<sup>th</sup> avenue. , followed by outlying residential neighborhoods. This work is normally performed simultaneously with the snow removal on Main Street. In addition, the staff will normally try to plow the alleys at the same time as the streets but this is done with a different piece of equipment so the schedule may be different.

#### First Priority

6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues around the School/City Hall

4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets around the school/City Hall

2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues

2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Streets

Oak Street

Ski Hill Lane

Queen and Pinecrest

Ouray Vista

Fedel Court

Loretta Court

Chautauqua Lane

#### Second Priority

Pool parking lot

Rotary Park

Box Canyon-lower Road

WWTP

Water Tank

Main Street parking

#### Third Priority

On-street parking in Business District

On-street Parking in residential areas

The crew will also attempt to clear snow from the local church parking lots on Saturday and Sunday mornings when possible.

### Sidewalk Snow Removal

In accordance with 1315-B of the Ouray Municipal Code the owner or tenant in possession of property abutting City sidewalks is responsible to remove accumulations of snow and ice from the sidewalks. While the City may elect to actively remove snow from critical sidewalks necessary for safe and expedient pedestrian travel (i.e. school access, public parks), it does so at

its own election, and this shall not lessen or dispense with the obligations of any property owners to maintain sidewalks abutting their properties.

#### Driveway Apron Snow removal

The City has no obligation to remove snow from access and driveway aprons other than upon City owned property and facilities. Property owners are responsible for removal of snow upon their own properties. The placement of removed snow on City street right-of-ways or sidewalks is prohibited. Pursuant to 13-2 of the City Code, it shall be unlawful to create or fail to remove any encroachments or obstructions including ice, snow, mud, dirt, debris, rubbish and filth upon any City owned property including but not limited to streets, alleys, sidewalks, curbs or gutters. Any violation of this prohibition is declared to be a nuisance, which may be abated by the City pursuant to the provisions this section 10-47 of the City of Ouray, Colorado, or in any lawful manner.

#### Public Parking Areas

Once snow is removed from public streets and critical public sidewalks, staff will pursue removal of snow in public on-street parking areas throughout the City where on-street parking occurs. This is likely to occur on the day following conclusion of the storm. Owners of vehicles parked in such areas are advised to park their vehicles on the north and east sides of the City streets on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and on the south and west sides of the street on Tuesday and Thursday during this time frame to allow for effective snow removal.

#### Private Parking Spaces

Property owners are required to store their snow on their own property or manage the removal of snow to a private location. If the property owner pushes snow onto the public right, city of Ouray will enforce Ouray Municipal Code Section 13-3.

#### Private Contractors

All private contractors managing or removing snow with motorized equipment within the public right of way are required to be permitted, as is required by Ouray Municipal Code section 13-3.

#### State Statute for Depositing Snow on Roadway

Colorado law (*see statute 43-5-301 below*) and many local ordinances prohibit the plowing, blowing, shoveling or otherwise placing of snow onto public roadways. This includes the ditch and right-of-way (ROW) area along the roadside. Pushing snow on public roadways can cause an increasing hazard with each snow storm, as snow piles or berms become larger, freeze and are more difficult to manage throughout the winter months.

Other hazards created by improper placement of snow on or near a public roadway include drainage problems, drifting, sight obstruction and hindered accessibility. Special attention should be made to keep crosswalks, intersections, entrances and exits clean and unobstructed.

#### **COLORADO REVISED STATUTE 43-5-301 Obstructing highway – penalty**

*No person or corporation shall erect any fence, house, or other structure, or dig pits or holes in or upon any highway, or place thereon or cause or allow to be placed thereon any stones, timber, or trees or any obstruction whatsoever. No person or corporation shall tear down, burn, or otherwise damage any bridge of any highway, or cause wastewater or the water from any ditch, road, drain, flume, agricultural crop sprinkler system, or other source to flow or fall upon any road or highway so as to damage the same*

*or to cause a hazard to vehicular traffic. Any person or corporation so offending is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than ten dollars nor more than three hundred dollars and shall also be liable to any person, unit of government, or corporation in a civil action for any damages resulting therefrom. Upon a third conviction therefor, the offender shall be punished by a fine of not less than ten dollars nor more than three hundred dollars or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than three days and shall also be liable to any person, unit of government, or corporation in a civil action for any damages resulting therefrom. Each day such condition is allowed to continue upon any highway shall be deemed a separate offense. This section makes it a criminal offense for anyone to obstruct a public highway.*