

NEWS RELEASE

DATE: January 9, 2004

TOPIC: SNOW REMOVAL INFORMATION

CONTACT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT 296-5401

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

The City Public Works Department asks that owners of cars completely covered by snow please expose part of the car so that snow plow operators can readily see that it is a car rather than a large mound of snow.

Crews will soon begin clearing snow from the stormwater catchbasins, which are normally located at a street corner or near an alley, so that snow melt can drain away. Because of the amount of snow, when catchbasins are cleared, there will be a pile of snow at each corner near a catchbasin.

The Department would like to answer some additional questions that callers are asking.

1. Why are snow plows seen driving with their plows up?
The plows may be traveling to a priority location, may need to be refilled with fuel or sand, or may be in need of repair.
2. Why wasn't snow plowed down to the street surface?
With predictions of freezing rain, crews were directed to leave some snow on the road for a safer surface. Ice on snow gives a better chance of traction than ice on pavement.
3. Why isn't snow plowed to the center of the streets?
Most of our streets are not wide enough for snow to be plowed to the center. For one-way streets, such as Second and Third Streets downtown, a center pile of snow impedes changing lanes except at the intersections.
4. Why isn't the snow hauled away from the downtown area?
The department does not have enough resources, in equipment and employees, to haul the snow, particularly when the crews are still clearing streets on an ongoing basis and uncovering stormwater catchbasins.
5. Why can't the plows be lifted at each driveway to avoid blocking them?
Lifting the plow blade at each driveway would create a series of berms across the street, making driving more difficult. And drivers cannot plow 70 miles of streets if they must clear 4000 driveways as well.
6. Why doesn't the City use a large scale snow blower?
While a blower works well in rural areas, it would not be appropriate in town where the snow would be blown onto sidewalks and against buildings.

The Department thanks the community for its cooperation and patience. For questions regarding the Snow Removal Policy, please contact the Public Works Office at 296-5401, ext 0, between 7:30 am and 3:30 pm.