

WSU SNOW REMOVAL POLICY
As of February 2009

Authority

Snow removal and ice maintenance on campus is provided by Facilities Operations (academic and administrative areas) and Residence Life (apartment buildings and residence halls). Within Facilities Operations, the Grounds, Heavy Equipment and Custodial divisions have shared responsibility. Residence Life has sole responsibility at their apartment buildings and entries to residence halls. These departments determine the policies and procedures for general upkeep of the campus grounds related to removal of snow and ice.

Purpose/Objectives

This policy is to help assure a viable plan for the removal of snow and ice through established guidelines and specific responsibility assignments. The plan helps provide an acceptable maintenance level of snow removal on University roads, walks, stairs, ramps, parking lots and building entries. The main objectives are to minimize accidents, property damage, and personal injury and maintain emergency access to campus.

Procedure Guidelines

Primary duties within Facilities Operations are split between sidewalks, entry ways to buildings and streets/roads and parking lots. The Grounds division provides primary snow removal on all sidewalks, ramps and stairways not attached to a building. Custodial provides snow removal services to building entry ways (until 1:30PM). The Heavy Equipment division maintains all streets, gravel roads and parking lots.

In order to meet the objectives stated above, designated routes and priorities have been set within each group to provide the most efficient methods for snow removal. (See Exhibit A for specific routes and priorities).

Grounds & Custodial Procedures

When one inch or more of snow accumulates on the campus sidewalks, the Grounds crew will be dispatched to begin removal operations. Main arterial sidewalks walkways are cleared as first priority. Secondary and tertiary sidewalk clearance follows. Steps, entryways, ramps, disabled parking spaces and other areas are cleared in priority order from high usage to low usage. For snow fall during the night, snow removal begins at 5PM and continues through the day as needed. Custodial Services provides removal at entryways until 1:30PM and Grounds provides additional services as needed until 5PM. These services are provided Monday through Friday. Night time shifts may occur if accumulation of snow is extreme.

The Grounds Department has two jeep plow routes, two sweeper routes, two tractor routes, one bobcat route and eleven hand shovel routes. Calcium chloride is used as a de-icing agent in shovel areas, liquid magnesium chloride is used in equipment areas and sand is used in areas where traction is needed. Each person's area of responsibility has high to low priority levels but if snow is continual throughout the day, main pedestrian thoroughfares (student access to class rooms, libraries, resident and dining halls, and the CUB, plus general campus access to the Safety Building and French Administration) and disabled access areas are highest priorities.

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Custodians assess the conditions in their area of responsibility during their shift and respond accordingly. Potassium chloride is used as a de-icing agent at the entries to buildings. Custodial employees are involved in varying degrees of snow removal responsibilities around the buildings where they work.

Heavy Equipment Procedure

The street and road crew will begin removal operations once one inch of snowfall occurs as well. In order to provide emergency access to campus, priority for snow removal begins with the main campus streets first, then the arterial streets, parking lots, and lastly gravel roads.

Heavy Equipment has a two-person 5:00 AM shift, a 7:30 six person shift, a two person 3:30 PM to midnight shift Monday through Friday, and a Saturday 7:30 AM and 3:30 PM two person shift throughout the winter.. There are two plows with sanders, one loader with a blade, one highway sander, one magnesium chloride liquid de-ice truck, one backhoe with a blade, one grader with plow, one jeep with a plow, and a bobcat with a plow. Should it continue to snow during the day, the main streets are maintained and employees respond to areas of need chiefly dictated by the Police Department.

Given a two inch snow fall and the current resources available, it may take several days to fully complete snow removal in all areas and follow-up sanding, rocking, and other ice control measures.

Safety Guidelines

Please remember that snow plows & snow equipment have the right of way at all times. Pedestrians and vehicles should allow a wide safety area around plows/equipment when they are working. While all operators try to watch out, their main focus is on the job of removing snow for public safety. Walking or driving too closely behind equipment can endanger you and the snow plow operator. Stay safe... Stay back.

Depending on the fall pattern & amount of snow during the season, snow berms may build up along streets & drives, and snow may be piled in vehicle and bike parking areas. This is an unfortunate but necessary action to keep roads and walkways clear for safe travel. With current limited resources, hauling snow away may not be an option until a break in weather.

Staff and students are encouraged to wear proper footwear for snowy and icy conditions, and to plan on taking extra time to reach destinations because of weather conditions. Ice and snow mitigation treatments on walks, steps, and streets are repeated throughout the day as conditions warrant, but proper care and concern by everyone traveling across campus is still the best defense for a safe journey. In addition, proper snow and ice traction tires on your vehicles are advisable during the winter months. Remember, primary responsibility for your safety resides with you... please be careful.