

Department of Municipal Works & Services

SNOW CLEARING: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Every year Gander is hit with the inevitable - snow and ice! Some winters we get more than our fair share. We have no control over the amount, but there are a few things you can do to make winter driving around the town safer for all motorists and pedestrians.

This is our plan to deal with winter. It includes suggestions for you to help us do a better job.

Keeping the Streets Clear

The Town of Gander Municipal Works Depot has a comprehensive snow clearing plan in place for the upcoming winter season. This plan is followed by the many equipment operators who plow, spread salt and sand Town streets to keep them safe and accessible for you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The truck/plow sanders are our first line of attack. These trucks follow assigned routes and, using a computerized control system, spread salt and sand for ice control (about 1,100 tonnes a year) and do minor plowing. For heavier snowfalls, our heavy equipment consisting of three loaders and two graders is brought into action. If required, our fleet of three snow blowers is used for snow removals and street widening.

Streets are plowed in a planned order based on a priority list.

- **1st priority** is given to the major streets - the ones that handle the most traffic.
- **2nd priority** includes secondary streets, connector streets and residential areas.

Keeping the Sidewalks Clear

Because of our fluctuating freeze/thaw winter climate and limited resources, the Town cannot clear sidewalks to a standard that pedestrians are used to in the summer. Sand is used often but great care must be taken while walking at any time during the winter.

Questions About Snow Clearing

“What specifically are Gander’s snow clearing regulations?”

The snow clearing regulations provide Gander Town Council with the authority to regulate parking on Town streets so that they can be kept accessible and safe for all motorists and pedestrians.

Snow clearing is covered under Sections 23-26 of the Town of Gander Traffic Regulations. Parking restrictions remain in effect from the first day of each November, up to and including the thirtieth day of the following April.

Section 23 of the Regulations states that during this period, the parking of unattended motor vehicles on Town streets or Town-owned parking lots between midnight and 8 a.m. is strictly prohibited, regardless of weather conditions.

Section 24 of the Regulations states that at any time during the day or night throughout the entire year, no vehicle may be parked in such a manner as to obstruct snow clearing.

Section 25 exempts emergency vehicles from the parking ban when they are attending an emergency, and Section 26 authorizes the Town to tow vehicles parked illegally as defined in the previous sections.

Citizens are also reminded that it is illegal under Section 97 of the Town of Gander Traffic Regulations to throw, sweep, shovel or place snow or ice from any private property upon any Town street or sidewalk.

“When does the on-street parking ban come into effect, other than midnight to 8 a.m.?”

The Town implements this parking ban when weather conditions and/or snow accumulation require it for operational reasons. When it becomes necessary to implement the parking ban, announcements will be made on the radio. Once implemented, the parking ban usually remains in effect until the end of snowstorms and/or until clean-up has been completed.

“Why is my street always the last to be plowed?”

All streets are plowed in order of priority: arterials first, followed by secondary and collector streets, and finally residential streets. In extreme weather conditions, plow operators are instructed to ensure that main streets are kept open and emergency services are maintained. In such circumstances, residential streets may not see a plow for an extended period. These situations are the exception and we ask for your patience.

“Why do I get tickets for parking on my street when snow clearing or snow removal operations are not taking place?”

The tickets you receive are issued when the on-street parking ban is in effect. The reason for this ban is to keep vehicles off the streets so that in the event of a sudden snowstorm or drifting conditions, snow plowing operations will not be hampered. Also, street widening or snow blowing may be carried out at anytime.

“It seems that every time I shovel my driveway I am plowed in again. Why is this?”

When plowing, we have to clear the streets as wide as possible to make room for the next snowfall and to clear catch basins located at the curb line to take water in the event of rain or a thaw. Often, two or more passes are needed to accomplish this. Whenever possible, you should wait and shovel your driveway after the street has been completely widened to avoid this frustration.

“Why can’t the Town remove snow that is pushed into my driveway?”

There are more than 3,000 driveways in Gander. The cost of removing snow from each one would be enormous.

“My neighbour parks his vehicle in such a way that the street cannot be widened to its full extent at my driveway entrance. What can I do about this?”

We have to plow around parked vehicles and this can create a problem at the entrance to a driveway. If your neighbour’s vehicle is moved after your street has been plowed, we will make an effort to return to your area and widen the street. If the vehicle is not moved for an extended period of time, call 256-4065 and a Municipal Enforcement Officer will visit the area to decide whether or not the vehicle should be towed away.

“What can I do to help?”

- ✓ **Park your vehicle(s) off the street throughout the winter season.** The biggest headache for our heavy equipment operators is vehicles parked on the street during the winter. It is difficult at the best of times to manoeuvre a sander or piece of heavy equipment with slippery road conditions and reduced visibility. Add parked vehicles to the mix and it becomes a nearly impossible task. Much time and effort is wasted shunting around parked vehicles and having to return to plow streets which could not be finished due to these vehicles. Parked vehicles slow down our snow clearing operations which affects everyone in the Town.

- ✓ **Don’t shovel, plow, or blow snow onto Town streets or sidewalks.** This creates a hazard for motorists and pedestrians. Sometimes our plows have to go back over the street again - an unnecessary expense and the snow often ends up in someone’s driveway again. Even if the pavement is bare and wet, that doesn’t necessarily mean the temperature is above zero and snow will melt - often the presence of residual road salt on the pavement makes it appear to be milder than it is. Persons who deposit snow on the street are subject to a fine. **Remember: if an accident is attributed to snow deposited on the street by you, then you could be held liable for damages or injuries.**

How to contact us:

If you would like to contact us with your comments, suggestions or concerns, we may be reached by telephone at 651-5943 or by fax at 256-5809.