



## **Winter Road Maintenance Policy**

### **Purpose**

The Selectboard of the Town of St Albans hereby establishes this Winter Maintenance Policy to clearly state the priorities for clearing and maintenance of Town-owned roads by the Department of Public Works to ensure the safe and efficient passage of vehicles during the inclement weather periods between November 1<sup>st</sup> and April 20<sup>th</sup> of each year.

### **A. Plowing**

1. The Town of St. Albans has approximately 54 miles of Town Highways. Town plow routes vary in mileage (e.g., open country routes are plowed with tandem trucks at slightly higher speed vs. developments plowed with smaller, more versatile trucks at slower speeds) and all take approximately 3 hours to complete. Each employee has a designated plow route, but all employees help each other at the completion of their routes.
2. These routes may vary for emergency situations (e.g. Fire, Ambulance, Tree down across road)
3. First priority for plowing will be to open routes for school buses and major traffic.
4. The Town does not plow private roads or private driveways.

### **B. Use of Salt and Sand**

1. The Town of St. Albans does not have a bare roads policy. Travelers who use Town roads should exercise reasonable caution during changing winter weather conditions.
2. Salt will be applied to most roads with minimal amount of sand added as necessary. During major storms, salt and sand will only be added at the completion of the storm, unless it becomes necessary sooner (e.g., roads begin to ice). During these types of storms, applications of materials are a waste of taxpayer money as the roads will usually be covered with the new snow within 20 minutes.

3. The Town uses salt “enhancement” products to help break the bond between the road and snow. These products help reduce the amount of salt necessary to melt snow, improve the effective use of salt by lowering its freezing point, and reduce our operating cost. The use of enhanced salt make us environmentally friendlier compared to the use of sand.

### **C. General Provisions**

1. Maintenance operations during winter storm events shall begin at approximately 4 AM and continue until routes are cleared. After 16 hours on the job, Department of Public Works personnel are required to stop operations and take a minimum of six (6) hours rest. In most cases, such as major snowstorms, there will be no winter maintenance between the hours of 10 PM and 4 AM.
2. Objects in the Town right-of-way that are not permitted are placed at the owner’s risk and the Town assumes no responsibility for any damage to objects placed therein.
3. Mailboxes are generally allowed to be placed in the Town right of way as a courtesy and are not replaced if damaged due to the Town performing winter maintenance. On a case by case basis, the Town evaluates each incident to determine if the Town will pay for a mailbox replacement.
4. If a mailbox has been struck because of operator error or equipment malfunction, the Town will attempt to reset it. Most mailboxes are not struck directly by Town equipment, but by the snow and ice coming off the plow.
5. Mailboxes should be 45” to the bottom of a mailbox and 8” in from the curb or edge of a driveway. That is the maximum the post office requires.

### **D. Depositing Snow onto Road or Highway**

When clearing snow from your driveway or private road, DO NOT deposit snow onto Town or State maintained roadways. Plowing snow onto or across a Town or State roadway is illegal.

Depositing snow onto or across certain highways is prohibited per 23 V.S.A. § 1126a. Snow plowed, blown by snow blower, or shoveled into a roadway can cause an obstacle which could result in an accident. When driving on an otherwise clear road and encountering an area of loose snow, it can pull a motor vehicle into a ditch, or even into on-coming traffic. If the snow has become compacted or frozen, it can create a speed bump of ice, which can cause damage to passing vehicles, including Town plow trucks.

We know winter weather will happen. The Selectboard and the Director of Public Works best advice would be to buy good winter tires, allow yourself extra time when it is snowing, and drive defensively and safely. The life you save may be your own or someone else’s.

*Adopted by the Town of St. Albans Selectboard 2.17.21*