



TOWN OF PAYSON SNOW REMOVAL POLICY

Updated February, 2022

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

(928) 472-5042

303 N Beeline Hwy, Payson, AZ 85541

SUMMARY

The Town of Payson is committed to minimizing disruption in services during winter storm events. The procedures established herein are designed to provide direction for efficient operations within the organization as well as to provide transparency to citizens about what to expect during a winter weather event.

The Town of Payson Public Works Department is responsible for snow removal on all public streets within the Town boundaries, excluding Highway 87 and Highway 260. State Highways are maintained by Arizona Department of Transportation.

Operational procedures may vary based on the severity of the weather event. Procedures vary based upon whether the snow is categorized as *typical snowfall conditions* or an *extreme snowfall/weather event*. Of critical importance is the necessity for all individuals and departments to remain calm and collected and respond in predictive fashion by the implementation of the following policies.

DEFINITIONS

Typical snowfall conditions - Customary seasonal snowfall lasting less than 48 hours and having an anticipated accumulation of less than 6 inches. The majority of snow removal falls into the category of typical snowfall conditions.

Extreme snowfall/weather event - Possibility for accumulation of snow or duration of event that exceeds *typical snowfall conditions*. Extreme snowfall/weather events are typically preceded by advisories or warnings from the National Weather Service and/or Gila County Emergency Management.

Weather Forecast – (Weather or Forecast) Atmospheric data and information used as a guide for snow removal activities utilizing scientific weather observation sources and weather predication to inform the street department or town authorities of impending weather activity. Weather advisory sources will be gathered at the town’s discretion and grounded in factual scientific data not from commercialized, or advertising sales-driven sources. As a general rule the street department will use the National Weather Service, NOAA, and AccuWeather websites as primary sources of predictive data.

Incident Commander – Person responsible for decisions that will affect course of actions regarding mobilization of equipment and need for focus of operations to change. This person may be the Town Manager, Deputy TM, or other designee of their choosing.

PROCEDURE

When the weather forecast gives substantial evidence that a snow event is on the way, all departments in snow removal will begin preparing equipment 24-48 hours in advance of predicted snow events.

TYPICAL SNOWFALL CONDITIONS

1. When a snowstorm begins during normal working hours, the Streets Operations Manager will place all field personnel on alert. If snow accumulations reach 3" to 4" and the weather forecast is for continued snow, then the Street Operations Manager will direct all Street Division field personnel to report to the Street Maintenance Facility on Airport Road.

2. When a snowstorm begins outside normal working hours, as snow accumulations reach 3" to 4" and the weather forecast is for continued snow, the Police Department Supervisor on duty will direct Police Dispatch to notify the Street Operations Manager. If the Street Operations Manager cannot be reached, they will notify the Public Works Director. Upon assessment by the Street Operations Manager, appropriate field personnel will be called in to respond to the Street Maintenance Facility and carry out snow removal operations.

3. Streets Department Operators and their equipment are responsible to clear the roads in accordance with the Town's Snow Removal Map. In general, the snow removal priorities are as follows:
 - First Priority is to clear street access to emergency service and care facilities: Police Department, Fire Stations, Gila County Sheriff Office, Banner Payson Medical Center, Emergency Medical Transport Facilities, Town Hall, and Town Maintenance Facilities. This priority also includes clearing the main traffic routes as shown in green on the Snow Removal Priority Map.

 - Second Priority is to clear the cross-connecting streets as shown in blue on the Snow Removal Priority Map.

 - Third Priority is to clear local streets, dead ends, cul de sacs, etc. as shown in yellow on the Snow Removal Priority Map. These streets will be cleared during daylight hours only.

5. Snow removal at the Payson Airport is the responsibility of Payson Airport. The Town may assist airport staff in removing snow at the airport as a third priority, if requested.

6. The Town is not responsible for and does not plow private roads, roads within gated communities or in subdivisions where the streets are not dedicated to the Town. These areas are shown in pink on the Snow Removal Priority Map.

7. The Town will spread chips and deicer at problem intersections and on steep roadways at the discretion of the Street Operations Manager.
8. In the event of an emergency, the Fire Department or Police Department will dispatch a public safety vehicle with plow to aid in snow removal of the area of emergency and may also request a street plow to a particular street, public or private, needing to be cleared in order to facilitate responding to an associated emergency.
9. If a town employee removing snow encounters a vehicle parked on a public roadway that appears to be a safety hazard to the general public, they are to contact the Police Department with the vehicle make, model, color, and license number and request that the vehicle be towed at the owners' expense.
10. Only in exigent circumstances will Town personnel tow a private vehicle. In this rare situation, the Town personnel will first contact his supervisor for permission to tow the private vehicle. If approved, only the owner/driver of the private vehicle will attach the towing device to the private vehicle.
11. The Town of Payson does not clear private driveways. Clearing of private driveways, including any snow wind row that may be piled across a private driveway by removing snow from the street is the responsibility of the individual property owner.
12. Typically, the Arizona Department of Transportation performs all snow removal activities on the State Highways within Payson. However, to assist in preventing accidents, the Police Department may request snow removal, chipping and deicing on the State Highways within Payson from the Public Works Department if no state personnel and/or equipment is available.
13. Individual departments shall be responsible for clearing their parking lots, pedestrian ways, and access to their facilities. The Water Department will clear Town Hall main parking lot, sidewalks, and entryways.

EXTREME SNOWFALL/WEATHER EVENTS

1. In addition to the procedures prescribed above for *typical snowfall conditions* the Town Manager or his/her designee shall establish an incident command system to augment personnel, equipment, and resources typically assigned to snow removal operations.
2. Communications center will establish a pre-recorded message line for calls that come into the public safety answering point outside the hours of 7:00am-5:00pm Monday-Friday.

3. Office support personnel from any Town Department may be temporarily re-assigned to assist the Public Safety Communications Center as deemed necessary by the Incident Commander.
(Example: After hours calls that need assistance beyond information from pre-recorded line will be forwarded to Public Works office personnel)
4. Field personnel from any Town Department will be responsible to assist in snow removal from Town of Payson parking lots, sidewalks and building entryways.
(Example: Water Division clears Town Hall complex parking lots, shovels site sidewalks and building entries)
5. Equipment and personnel from any Town Department can be called out to temporarily be re-assigned to assist in snow removal and/or debris from roadways as necessary.
(Example: Parks Maintenance removes downed trees in roadways, clears fire station parking lots, shovels sidewalks, and building entries, clearing of emergency evacuation center parking and entries, placement of barricades/signage as needed)
6. Police Department and Fire Department will ensure one 4WD truck for each department has been outfitted with a plow blade. These vehicles will have primary responsibility for clearing routes as needed for priority emergency response. Public Safety communications center shall assign and track the vehicles as they deem appropriate. In the event one or both of these vehicles is unavailable the Incident Commander shall assign other department equipment to assist public safety.
(Example: Parks Maintenance plow and/or Airport Maintenance plow)