

From: Jon Sonnenberg, Superintendent of Highways and Public Works, Town of Rome

Date: 12/21/17

Re: Snow Plowing Guidelines



With another plowing season upon us, I wanted to take a moment to share on how a decision to plow our roads is made.

Each storm is unique based on several factors. The amount of snow certainly is a primary factor, but whether it is a wet or dry snow, the air temperature, the road, surface temperature and whether the snow has stopped are considerations as well. For example, we may plow a lesser amount of wet vs the same amount of dry snow, as wet snow will pack quicker and be more likely to affect driving conditions.

In addition to plowing, we will put down salt or a salt/sand mixture as well. Temperature will also affect this decision. Salt is effective to a temperature of approximately 10 degrees, but will decrease in efficacy as temperatures fall. We also apply sand which offers increased traction in slippery conditions but does not melt snow or ice.

The decision to plow or put down material is not made lightly. We look at forecasts, current conditions, and reports from the public safety professionals. Safety of the motoring public is our primary concern; however we try to be good stewards about the costs of plowing.

Please note that there are Town ordinances and state statutes that cover certain aspects of snow plowing, and they are as follows:

The Town of Rome ordinance 8.01 (9) states:

- (a) A snow emergency exists in the Town whenever a snowfall during any period of twenty-four (24) hour or less reaches a depth of three (3) inches or more.
- (b) During snow emergencies, parking of vehicles, trailers, snowmobiles, ATV's, etc. on the pavement or shoulder of any Town road is prohibited until the highway department has plowed the road.

Also please note that it is unlawful to push snow or other materials onto or across roadways per Wisconsin state statutes 86.01 and 346.94(5).

Often this can be as much "art" as "science", and from time to time Mother Nature surprises us. Please remember to make your own decisions based on your needs and abilities about if you should go out in a storm. Remember on slippery roads, we all need to decrease speeds and allow for greater stopping distances. Please contact me at 715-325-8017 with any questions you may have. Thank you and drive safely.