

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

WINTER, HIGH WINDS, AND INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY AND PRIORITIES

Pursuant to RSA 231:92a, the Alstead Select Board hereby establishes the following policy and procedure for winter, high winds, and inclement weather road maintenance.


PART A: POLICY OBJECTIVES

1. **OBJECTIVE:** The Town of Alstead seeks to provide timely, efficient and cost-effective high winds, winter maintenance, snow removal, and ice control for the Town's residents and general motoring public.
2. **PROCEDURE:** The objective stated in PART A (1) may best be achieved by implementation and execution of the procedures and tasks outlined in PART B of this policy, the Town's Winter Operations Snow Removal and Ice Control Procedures. Due to the many variables that are inherent in New England weather, each storm or weather event may require slightly different effort or emphasis on any number of maintenance tasks which, together, determine the overall winter maintenance, snow removal or ice control strategy.
3. **LEVEL OF SERVICE:** It is not reasonably possible to maintain a black, snow and ice-free, road during a storm. The Town intends to utilize its best efforts, within the means available, to provide practical, safe access to homes, businesses, and municipal facilities during and after winter storms.
 - a. November 15th to April 15th no parking on town roads.
 - b. As a general policy, the Town will start to conduct Snow Removal Operations upon accumulations of 2 (two) inches of snow fall. The Road Agent, or the Road Agent's Designee, may, at his or her discretion, based upon weather information reports or prevailing conditions, elect to not remove snow until greater or lessor amounts have accumulated.
 - c. Pretreatment and ice control may be implemented prior to, during or after a storm, as determined to be most effective, noting that salt has a much slower effect on melting snow and ice at temperatures below 25 degrees Fahrenheit, and thus may not be applied until it is warmer.
4. **COMMAND:** The Alstead Road Agent, or the Road Agent's Designee, shall direct all winter maintenance activities for the Town.
5. **EXECUTION:** This policy, including the standard operating procedure, is intended to serve as the normal procedure for winter maintenance, snow removal, and ice control for the Town of Alstead. One or more of the following, which may delay or prevent the implementation of this policy, may affect all or any part of the normal operating procedure.
 - a. Equipment Breakdown
 - b. Snow Accumulation in Excess of One Inch Per Hour
 - c. Freezing
 - d. Rain or Other Icing Conditions
 - e. Traffic Congestion
 - f. Emergencies
 - g. High winds
 - h. Personnel Illness or Excused Absence (example Jury Duty)
6. **NOTICE:** This policy shall be posted in appropriate public places in Alstead as determined by the Select Board. All residents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the contents hereof as it describes conditions that one might encounter before, during and after a winter or inclement weather event.

7. **ADOPTION:** The Alstead Select Board has adopted these policies, and the accompanying PART B, encompassing Standard Operating Procedures, on this date, January 12, 2021.



Rock Wilson, Chair



Mary Ann Wolf



Joseph Levesque

PART B:

Winter Operations

Snow Removal and Ice Control Procedures

1. **EQUIPMENT and PERSONNEL:** The assets available for winter snow removal and ice control are established within the parameters of the annual budget approved by the Town. In formulating the budget, the Town seeks to allocate sufficient funds for this purpose, but variable weather conditions may make budget projections inaccurate. When weather conditions require additional funds beyond those available in the budget, the Town will undertake such actions as are reasonably necessary to address such conditions, but the Town is bound by law to follow certain legal requirements and procedures that may delay immediate availability of funds for responses. The Highway Department utilizes all available assets of the Department as needed to address winter weather emergencies. This includes all full time and part time employees as well as vehicles and equipment.
2. **ROUTES:** Plow routes may be altered for more efficient snow removal and ice control or cost efficiencies. The Road Agent or the Road Agent's Designee shall, in accordance with this Policy and Winter Operations Procedures be responsible for maintaining the most cost-effective routes based on all variables during any winter event.
3. **MATERIALS:** The Town bases its annual budget for snow removal and ice control materials in part on past usage and estimated weather forecasts. The sand is used as an abrasive and is applied to the road to improve traction for motor vehicles. Salt is employed as a deicing and anti-icing agent. The estimated annual supply of sand is produced each year, mixed with salt, and stockpiled at the Highway Department's sand/salt storage yard. Rock salt is purchased from a supplier as needed. Unless weather conditions require a different approach, winter maintenance routes are treated with a mixture of sand and salt, generally with a minimum amount of salt to prevent freezing of the mixture. This mixture may be adjusted according to the nature of the storm with additional salt added if needed. This mixture is applied to traveled ways. At the beginning and at the conclusion of a storm, salt may also be applied to the center of the paved roads where traffic can work the salt traveling either way. The salt in conjunction with traffic action, creates a watery brine melting snow and ice, and resisting snow and ice packing on the roadway. The road crown further assists with the spreading of the brine mixture. The sand/salt mixture as well as salt itself, is only effective to approximately 25 degrees Fahrenheit. Other deicing agents are effective to lower temperatures, but cost and need for specialized equipment have forestalled their use at this time. Highway salt and sand supplies are for use on municipal property only.
4. **COMMUNICATIONS:** The majority of the Public Works rolling stock is equipped with two-way radios. Each plow and equipment operator are assigned a unique call number, and each operator may communicate with the Alstead Police Department. The operator is aware of the importance of the radios, and maintains their operation and communication during a winter event.
5. **SCHOOLS:**
 - a. **Maintenance:** The Town is not responsible for the clearing of snow and winter treatment of the Vilas Middle School or Alstead Primary School parking lots. On days when school is in session, winter maintenance efforts are timed to coincide with bus routing and delivery of students to the extent reasonably practicable.
 - b. **School cancellation:** The School Superintendent, or designated official representative, may contact the Road Agent or Highway Department to determine condition of the municipality's roads in order to determine the advisability of students using school buses. The school representative(s) shall make the decision to cancel or postpone school for that day.

6. **PARKING:** The Town of Alstead has adopted the following winter parking regulations. There shall be no parking on Town roads November 15th through April 15th. One purpose of this parking ban is to allow winter maintenance crews unobstructed snow removal and ice control routes, as much as possible, to maintain the maximum effectiveness of their efforts.
7. **PLOW ROUTE PRIORITIES:** With a total of approximately 50 miles of roads, from which to remove snow and control ice, the Highway Department has to assign priorities for winter maintenance route activity in order to maximize the effectiveness of its efforts.
 - a. Town Roads. Town roads will be given first priority for winter maintenance. The timing of maintenance on some routes will coincide with the Bus Routes with the intent to provide snow clearing to within one hour of the regular bus schedule for that route.
 - b. Fire Department Station areas, Public parking areas at the town offices both front and rear, Bragg Lane and the transfer station, will be plowed and skid resistant material applied as needed.
 - c. The Shedd Porter Library access, steps, adjacent sidewalks including the sidewalk to the village fire station will be cleared, maintained and treated as needed.
8. **ROADS AND SIDEWALKS NOT RECEIVING WINTER MAINTENANCE:** The Town does not maintain a number of roadways and sidewalks as part of its ongoing winter maintenance activities. The areas not maintained by the Town include:
 - a. Class VI roads
 - b. Private Roads, driveways and sidewalks
 - c. Roads, sidewalks and other areas maintained or within the jurisdiction of State, Federal or other units of government.
9. **DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY:**
 - a. The Town assumes no responsibility for damage to private property that is located within the public right of way as such property is deemed an encumbrance that is not permitted to be located in the right of way. The right of way (ROW) is often 50' wide and is often mistaken by property owners as their property. In most cases, the ROW often extends 10' to 20' either side of the paved or gravel surface of the road. Homeowners often cultivate their lawns, place mailboxes, erect fences or stonewalls in these areas, which improves the appearance of the road greatly, but may obstruct or interfere with maintenance being conducted on the roadway, including winter maintenance.
 - b. In the event of personal property damage occurring as a result of winter maintenance activities conducted by the Town, the Town may be held responsible only for damages arising from negligence or other fault properly attributable to the Town. The Town will not be responsible for the repair or replacement of damaged property, with no exception.
 - c. The Town will not be responsible for damage to any vehicle which may be damaged during winter maintenance if the vehicle is parked in violation of any State law or local regulation, including any winter or snow removal parking limitation periods.
10. **PLACEMENT OF SNOW IN RIGHT OF WAY:** Pursuant to RSA 236:20, RSA 47:17, paragraph VII and RSA 41:11, it shall be unlawful to plow, shovel, blow, or place, snow by any means, onto Town roads or sidewalks or roadways to the opposite side snow banks across any and all Town roads, including Class 5 & 6, or to deposit snow within the traveled portion of Town roads.
 - a. **Definitions:** *Across town roads* – shall mean pushing snow from one side to the other, where snow would be deposited within the right of way of any road.
Traveled Portion – shall mean any part of the roadway in which vehicles would travel or within the shoulders of said roadway.

- b. **Penalties:** A violation of this section may result in:
 - i. First Offence – Warning
 - ii. Second Offence - \$100.00 Fine
 - iii. Third and Subsequent Offences - \$200.00 Each Offence
- c. **Responsibility:** The owner of the property where the snow originated from shall be deemed responsible for any violations of this ordinance

11. POST STORM OPERATIONS: As determined by the Road Agent or the Road Agent's Designee, snow banks resulting from the previous accumulations may be pushed back, or shelved, using the plow and wing or suitable equipment to make space for future snow storms.

12. SNOW REMOVAL FROM TOWN ROADS and OBSTRUCTIONS: During the initial stages of a storm, Town roads will be plowed and receive surface treatment as appropriate in accordance herewith. As parked vehicles are removed from the streets, snow removal equipment may swing wider through the street to push back accumulated snow.

- a. Snow removal operations may be delayed or ended in areas where vehicles are improperly parked or where they might interfere with snow removal operations.
- b. If any pedestrian, or other item interferes with snow removal operations, the Town's personnel will reasonably attempt to notify the owner/operator to remove it immediately. If the owner/operator cannot be readily located or if the owner/operator refuses to cooperate, the police will be notified of the pedestrian obstruction and the item may be removed at the owner's expense.
- c. RSA 262:32 gives the Town the authority to tow any vehicles that violate the winter parking regulations at the owner's expense. Any vehicle which otherwise interferes with the reasonable efforts of the Town's winter maintenance is subject to ticketing and/or towing after reasonable attempt to notify the owner/operator.
- d. The Town is not responsible for damages to such vehicles arising out of Winter Maintenance Operations or a result of towing.

13. ENFORCEMENT: The police department shall be notified of any vehicle obstruction and/or damage. The following procedure will be utilized.

- a. When a violation of Section 6 or 12 above occurs, the Town employee will attempt to locate the operator/owner of the vehicle.
- b. If this is not possible or practical, the Alstead Police will be notified as well as the Road Agent or the Road Agent's Designee.
- c. A police officer or the Road Agent or the Road Agent's Designee may have a vehicle or item towed/removed at the owner's expense.
- d. Written notice of the violation containing a description of the parking offence and applicable schedule of penalties must be affixed to the vehicle at the time of the offence. This notice shall be deemed adequate service of process to the vehicle owner.
- e. If an officer is not available to serve the notice, the Road Agent or the Road Agent's Designee may document the violation through photos and text messages or email to the Chief of Police. Section c still applies. An officer will serve notice on the vehicle as soon as practical after the vehicle is towed.
- f. Informational cards notifying a vehicle owner/operator that they are in violation of the winter parking ban may be affixed to a vehicle at anytime between November 15th and April 15th by any town employee, regardless of whether or not snow removal operations are occurring at that time. (See attachment A)

14. PENALTIES:

- a. Vehicle may be towed at owner's expense regardless of offence schedule below.
- b. First Offence -Warning
- c. Second Offence - \$100.00 Fine
- d. Third and Subsequent Offences - \$200.00 Fine Each

15. RESPONSIBILITY: Violation of the parking restrictions and charges shall be deemed the responsibility of the registered owner of such vehicle. Such registration may be proven as set forth in RSA 261:60. Said registered owner shall be conclusively presumed to be in control of the vehicle at the time of the parking violation, and no evidence of actual control or culpability need be proven as an element of the offense in accordance with RSA 231:132-A.

16. PROCEDURE FOR PAYMENT:

- a. The operator or owner must, within seven (7) days of the time when a notice of violation was attached to the vehicle, pay to the Town of Alstead by mail or personal appearance at the Town Clerk's office the applicable fine amount pursuant to fine schedule in Section 14.
- b. Failure by the owner or operator to make a payment within fourteen (14) days may result in the issuance of a summons to the owner to appear in Keene District Court to answer to the charges of violating the ordinance as provided in RSA 231:132-a.