



City of Spokane—Media Release

www.spokanecity.org

October 16, 2017

Contact: Marlene Feist
Public Works & Utilities
(509) 625-6505

REVAMPED SNOW PLAN CENTERS AROUND MORE PLOWING IN MORE AREAS SOONER

New pilot program will take on driveway berms, too

More plowing in more areas sooner is the centerpiece of the City of Spokane’s revamped snow response plan. Mayor David Condon and other officials rolled out the new plan, which is designed to try out new strategies, incorporate best practices, and most importantly, respond to citizen concerns.

“We have developed a snow plan that departs from business as usual to effect true change on behalf of our citizens,” says Mayor Condon. “We’re going to add more plowing on residential streets, take on driveway berms, and get through the work more quickly. And, we’re going to ask our citizens to collaborate with us to allow everyone to get around in winter weather more easily.”

“Following last winter’s series of large snowfalls, we felt like we had an opportunity to make some changes,” says Council Member Amber Waldref, who sponsored a City Council resolution last spring to encourage a new look at the snow plan. “Schools, sidewalks, and a speedier plow have been prioritized.”

The City will implement the revamped plan for this winter, but anticipates that refinement could be needed along the way. Here’s a look at the key changes.

Plowing

- When it snows, even if it’s just an inch or two, crews will plow all the streets, including residential streets. To hold down costs, crews will complete this work primarily during regular day shifts Monday through Friday.
- Utility crews will supplement Street crews for plowing efforts sooner, and more equipment will be available on a regular basis for plowing.
- During a larger snowfall of four inches or more, crews still will move to 24/7 operations to complete a full-City plow. With increased staffing levels and more equipment, crews expect to be able to complete that plow in three days instead of four.

-more-

Driveway Berms & Sidewalk Snow

- The Street Department will outfit seven pieces of equipment, including four new loaders and three graders, with “gates” that allow plow drivers to avoid placing snow across a driveway or alley access.
- This is a pilot program and use of the gates will be spread out across the City. The City will buy more gates next year if the program is successful.
- Changed plowing techniques also will help alleviate berms and snow pushed onto sidewalks. Crews will plow away from the curb to help keep snow away from driveway and sidewalks. Snow also may be pushed to center medians in some cases.

Parking Changes

- Citizens will be asked to park on the odd side of the street in residential areas for the entire snow season, which runs from Nov. 15 to March 15. The goal is to make it easier for citizens to comply with parking rules and aid plow drivers with their work.
- Downtown on snowy days, on-street parking will be prohibited between midnight at 6 a.m. so parking bays can be plowed out. New signs will be installed in the downtown, indicating this rule within the boundaries of Maple to Division and I-90 to the Spokane River. The City has some parking options for snow days under the freeway, particularly for those with residential parking passes in the core, and there are numerous off-street surface parking lots as well.
- Citizens must move recreational vehicles, boats, and trailers off the street to winter storage locations. These vehicles will be towed if they aren’t moved by Nov. 15.

Collaboration on Sidewalks

- Property owners remain responsible for clearing the sidewalk adjacent to their properties. The City is asking citizens to clear a 36-inch path to allow school children, disabled individuals, bus riders, and other pedestrians to move safely through the community. The goal is to complete that work by 9 a.m. after a snowfall.
- Not everyone is capable of shoveling. Neighbors are asked to help one another with snow clearing. Senior or disabled individuals also can call 3-1-1 to help get connected with volunteer services that may be able to help.

Communication

- The City will share information before and during the snow season, providing information with the local media and through a variety of communication tools from social media to CityCable 5 to the City’s web site.
- Staff will update online plowing maps more frequently during 24/7 operations to give citizens better information on snow plowing progress.
- Residential routes are being modified and renamed, closely following the City’s neighborhood boundaries to make it easier for people to understand where plows are.

About the City of Spokane

The City of Spokane, home to more than 210,000 people, is located in the heart of the Inland Northwest. Our 2,000 employees strive to deliver efficient and effective services that facilitate economic opportunity and enhance the quality of life for all our citizens. For more information, visit www.spokanecity.org and follow us @spokanecity on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).