

McLean County Snow Removal Policy

OVERVIEW

With the advent of another winter season in the northern plains comes the possibility of snow, freezing rain and slippery roadways, and area resident's concern about access to work, school, recreation and other winter activities.

McLean County has adopted this policy to serve as a general guide for winter roadway operations and to inform roadway users of the process through which winter roadway situations will be addressed. The safety of county roadway users is the paramount concern of the McLean County Highway Department. Our goal is to operate county roadways in a reasonably safe condition and to provide such service in an effective and environmentally responsible manner.

Winter roadway conditions, and snow removal operations, in rural McLean County can be substantially different than what may be experienced in the city. In can be nice in town and just a few miles out the snow can be blowing, with zero visibility. Roadway users must be prepared for rapidly changing weather and roadway conditions. As with any driving situation, roadway users must exercise reasonable caution and drive with care. Driving at the posted speed limit may not be possible at all times.

It is important to note, that McLean County cannot and does not assure a completely bare pavement.

Anti-skid applications will be focused on intersections, hills, curves and other potentially problematic areas to assist with traction; however, these efforts do not relieve the motorist of the responsibility to use good judgment in using the county's roadways.

In general, snow removal begins when there has been an accumulation of snow on a roadway that is a hindrance to normal traffic. The McLean County Highway Department is responsible to remove snow and other materials from County roadways and maintain them for safe driving conditions. The McLean County Highway Superintendent or his designee will initiate snow removal operations.

Normally, snow removal will start as soon after the heavy snow stops as possible. Because of the added danger to both employees and the public, snowplows will not be dispatched during storms or when conditions are such that may endanger lives and equipment.

Roads will be cleared in order of priority. Three priorities have been established with the objective being to get as much access to cleared roads as quickly as possible.

Priority One: County numbered roads, blacktop and gravel.

Priority Two: Unorganized township roads and those roads that are in that township.

Priority Three: Organized townships.

Emergency Snow Removal: This type of service is for "EMERGENCIES" and will be our top priority to those in need of emergency assistance. When we go out on an emergency call we require medical, fire or sheriff personnel and or equipment to respond to the address requesting assistance. This service will be provided no matter where you live in McLean County if needed.

It is recognized that the given time estimates assume moderate snowfall and favorable weather following the storm and normal equipment mortality.

Sanding Icy Roads

GENERAL POLICIES

As a preface to these guidelines, it must be understood that snow and ice storms and freezing ground temperatures are highly variable from event to event. Some snow and ice storms and icy conditions will dissipate before action is warranted. Other snow and ice storms and icy conditions may extend for several days. Sometimes snow and ice conditions may occur in one part of the County and not in other parts, while at other times they are scattered across various areas throughout the entire County. These guidelines must remain flexible due to the infinitely variable nature of weather events, and must allow human judgment to be considered when making any decisions regarding the timing and selection of those roads needing plowing or sanding. By and large, crews are well experienced in performing this work, having learned what is needed through their years of experience. However extensive the County's efforts, there is no assurance that a roadway will be completely clear of snow and ice. The County's efforts are not a substitute for well maintained, properly equipped vehicles and responsible driving on the part of the roadway users.

Weather Monitoring

Road Forman's will monitor the weather. Weather will also be monitored by direct observation depending on the time of day; staff availability and funding; by notification from Sheriff dispatch; by calls to or from outlying McLean County employees at work or at home; by conversations with citizens (including area contacts); by conversations with employees at other agencies involved with snow plowing and road sanding; by conversations with school transportation supervisors; by television and radio weather reports; and by other means found useful.

Procedures for Dealing with Road Conditions

Plowing will typically be performed when there is enough snow to make plowing possible and necessary—typically considered to be a minimum of approximately (4) inches in depth. In general, crews will defer plowing roads with light snowfall in favor of routes with deeper snowfall. Sometimes snow falling in warmer times of the year melts before plows can do much good. Such snow may not need to be plowed. When ice is encountered during reconnaissance on a sanding route, sand will typically be applied to aid traction. Depending upon the situation, however, sometimes the limited supply of sand in the truck is reserved for more problematic areas, while less problematic areas are left un-sanded. Sand is generally not applied when snow is falling because subsequent snow covers the sand, because subsequent plowing would remove the sand, and because traction in fresh snow is not so dependent on sand. When slush is encountered during reconnaissance on a plowing route and if freezing is anticipated, efforts will be made to remove as much slush from the roads as is feasible prior to its freezing—time, equipment, and manpower permitting.

Areas to be Sanded

McLean County does not have the equipment nor the resources to maintain all county roadways ice free therefore, when ice is encountered, efforts will be made to remove as much ice as feasible from the roads on steep hill areas, bridges, curves and major intersections when sanding – time, equipment, and manpower permits.

4) PERSONAL PROPERTIES

A) Mail boxes or other personal property damaged during snow removal activity will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Only those receptacles that were properly located and installed in accordance with adopted design standards and which were damaged by actual physical contact with county equipment will be considered for repair at the county's expense.

B) McLean County residents and business are reminded that "IT IS AGAINST THE LAW" to deposit snow upon

or across public roadways. Piles of snow left on or near the roadway can freeze into a solid mass, creating a hazardous situation for vehicles and snowplows. Collisions and damages caused by snow placed in the roadway may result in a substantial liability to the property owner(s).

C) McLean County operators may assist stranded motorists by contacting law enforcement or other emergency personnel. County employees will not attempt to remove or extract vehicles from ditches, snow banks or any other impediment. Residents are reminded to remove parked vehicles and other property from public roadways and rights-of-way to assist in snow removal.

D) Motorists are encouraged to ensure that their vehicles are appropriately maintained and equipped for winter-weather driving situations.

The McLean County Board of County Commissioners adopted this policy on 10/03/2017.