

For more information:  
The Road Commission of  
Kalamazoo County will be happy  
to answer any further questions  
or concerns.



Road Commission of  
Kalamazoo County  
3801 E. Kilgore Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Phone (269) 381-3171  
Fax (269-)381-1760

[www.kalamazoocountyroads.com](http://www.kalamazoocountyroads.com)



2017

## Snow Removal



WINTER MAINTENANCE  
OPERATIONS IN KALAMAZOO

## Abandoned Cars

If there are cars abandoned in the right-of-way that interfere with the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) the Sheriff Department will be contacted.

To avoid stalled cars during the winter, residents are advised to keep their cars in good working condition and not attempt to drive through drifts. Although the RCKC personnel are not authorized to pull cars from snowdrifts, we will notify the Sheriff Department of your need for assistance.

## Plowing Service Limitations

The RCKC's snow removal policy is designed to provide the best service possible, but residents should have realistic expectations. Unpredictable weather conditions or events and limited financial resources make it impossible to ensure absolutely safe roads.

We encourage you to slow down and drive defensively. Even with the best service, driving conditions may still be hazardous in the winter months.

**Why is the RCKC not salting and sanding every road in the county during winter maintenance?**

Certainly sanding and salting every road is cost prohibitive, however more importantly salting and sanding best practices indicate that road salts commonly used in the winter to melt ice and keep roads clear are potentially allowing the salt to reach groundwater and wells. Sand potentially impacts the ability of storm drains to also function properly. Not to mention our vehicles and the effects to our infrastructure. Therefore, RCKC limits the use of both materials primarily at hills, curves and intersections without presenting

unacceptable risk, while also protecting our surface and ground water. For additional information on RCKC Environmental – Water Resource Protection please visit the [Engineering](#) page of our website .

## Michigan Snow Statute

MCL 257.677a—Snow, ice, slush on roadway

- (1) As used in this section:
  - a. "Person" shall not include the state or a political subdivision of the state or an employee of the state or a political subdivision of the state operating within the scope of his duties.
  - b. "Safety Vision" means an unobstructed line of sight enabling a driver to travel upon, enter, or exit a roadway in a safe manner.
- (2) A person shall not remove, or cause to be removed, snow, ice, or slush across a roadway or the shoulder of a roadway in a manner which obstructs the safety vision of the driver of a motor vehicle other than off-road vehicles.
- (3) A person shall not deposit, or cause to be deposited, snow, ice, or slush onto or across a roadway or the shoulder of the roadway in a manner which obstructs the safety vision of a motor vehicle.
- (4) A person shall not deposit, or cause to be deposited, snow, ice or slush on any roadway or highway.



## Safe Driving Conditions

During the winter months safe driving conditions are a top priority for the RCKC. In all, we are responsible for snow and ice control on more than 1,266 miles of county roads. By monitoring weather forecasts frequently we are able to meet winter's challenges and implement an effective snow and ice removal plan.

If you have questions about snow removal in an incorporated area, you should contact that particular city or village. Michigan Department of Transportation handles snow removal activities on roads under its jurisdiction (I, U.S. and M routes).

## Criteria for Snow Removal

Generally, plowing operations begin when slippery conditions exist or snow levels reach about two inches on most major roads. If snow continues to fall or is predicted, the snow removal crews are prepared to respond accordingly. Special attention is paid to road surface on bridges since they tend to freeze more rapidly than other surfaces.

When snow has fallen during the night, plowing begins at 4 a.m., so the roads will be as clear as possible by the time you start for school or work. If weather or driving conditions warrant, a special night crew works with the Sheriff Department to handle emergency situations. The RCKC and the Sheriff Department work closely to make sure road conditions are safe for area motorists. The Sheriff Department also handles emergency calls to the RCKC after regular business hours and can alert crews to respond to a particular problem.

## The Snow Route System

The RCKC has designated a special network of roads within the county as a snow route system. Snow route roads receive our first attention. When winter weather affects road conditions, our goal is to provide the maximum level of service to the greatest number of people as quickly as possible. This network includes more than 260 miles.

### Snow Removal Priorities:

1. Snow route roads
2. Balance of primary roads
3. Local Roads
4. Subdivision/plat streets
5. Dead-end and cul-de-sac roads

Everyday, service is provided to priorities 1, 2 and 3 during snow events. Every other day service is our goal for plat streets, dead-end and cul-de-sac roads. (If a storm is long lasting or a second storm starts before clean-up on priorities 4 and 5 have been completed, crews will return to priorities 1, 2 and 3.)

## Materials

Salt/sand/liquid deicer mix is applied as moderately as possible, without presenting unacceptable risk to the motoring public. The salt keeps the sand from freezing, while the sand provides traction for vehicles.

When the temperature goes below 20 degrees the liquid deicer moistens the salt or sand/salt mix, hastening the melting action that had been slowed by the low temperature.

## Mailboxes Damaged by Road Commission Operations

A mailbox or snow shield is personal property and thus is placed in the public road right-of-way at its own risk. Mailbox owners are encouraged to regularly inspect and perform routine maintenance on their mailbox, just as they would for other parts of their property. Mailboxes should withstand wet heavy snow and slush coming off from a plow.

The RCKC regrets any damage to mailboxes and/or supports that occurs as a result of road maintenance activities. By law, the RCKC has no legal responsibility for personal property claims while in the course of its governmental function. The RCKC will not assume responsibility for mailbox or snow shield damage that may be caused by snow/ice that is being plowed from the roadway.

Because it is the statutory responsibility of the RCKC to maintain the roadways and right-of-way property, road agencies are not held liable or responsible for any damage caused to private installations located within the public roads and/or right-of-way in place without a permit.



## Reminders

Please help us educate children on the risks presented by snowplows and the dangers of playing on the high piles of snow and ice near the roadway.

### Children

- Please KEEP CHILDREN AWAY from piles of snow
- Do not build snow forts, make tunnels, or play in snow banks next to roads
- Keep away from the edge of the roadway as you wait for the school bus or get the mail
- Stay away from the end of the driveway when a snow plow is approaching.
- Hidden objects under the snow, when thrown by the snow plow could cause serious injury
- Keep sleds and toys away from the roadways at all times

### Motorists

- Do not park or abandon a vehicle or other object in the right-of-way
- Do not attempt to pass a snow plow while they are plowing
- Never pass a plow on the right side as wing plows are often hidden by the snow cloud being kicked up by the plow
- Plow drivers have limited visibility and they cannot see directly behind their trucks
- Motorists are advised to not travel next to a plow
- Plows can suddenly move sideways from hitting drifts or cutting through packed snow
- Don't crowd the plow
- Always allow extra time for travel