

# **Town of Panton Winter Operations Policy**

Adopted by the Selectboard 1-11-2011

## **Introduction**

The Town of Panton is responsible for winter maintenance of the roads to ensure safe passage and maintain adequate traction.

- This does not mean completely bare, dry pavement should be expected during or after a snowfall.
- Further, this does not mean the roads will be completely free of snow and ice.

The Road Foreman has direct responsibility for the winter maintenance under the general directives of the Selectboard. The following provides the Selectboard directives.

## **Personnel and Equipment**

The Town of Panton has the following personnel available for snow and ice removal:

- One full time road foreman
- One full time maintenance employee

The Town of Panton has the following equipment available for snow and ice removal:

- One 2009 truck with plow and sander
- One 2007 truck with plow and sander
- One 1994 road grader with front plow, belly blade, and wing
- One 1999 backhoe

## **Time Periods**

The overall winter operations season is generally from October through April, weather dependant. The winter operations take place over four distinct periods as follows.

1. Pre-Winter Preparation
2. Winter Storm Operations
3. Continuing Winter Operations in Non-Storm Periods
4. Post Winter Follow-up

Each of these periods has specific directives for the Panton road crew.

### **Directives- Pre-Winter Preparation**

1. The road crew shall provide adequate material for winter road maintenance, which includes hauling sand and obtaining salt.
2. The road crew shall perform maintenance on the equipment to ensure that the equipment is ready and available for the winter season. This includes needed repairs, adequate tires, proper operation of safety equipment, etc.

3. The road crew shall have on hand spare parts that might be needed during the winter storm season.
4. The road crew shall install snow plows on the trucks.
5. The road crew shall perform a check of all roads to ensure safe snow removal. A check should be done to identify safety risks in the road surface and to obtain an overview of obstacles and obstructions on the shoulders. This includes guardrails with proper markings, ledges, bridges, pavement dips/humps/cracks, mailboxes, and culverts. Any objects in the right of way that may impede snow plowing shall be removed.
6. The road crew shall install snow fence in appropriate areas, as determined by the road foreman.

### **Directives- Winter Storm Operations**

1. Before a winter storm hits the area, the road crew shall plan an approximate time to begin snow removal operations. On week days, this should be early enough to remove snow before the morning commute. Consideration should be given to the afternoon commute. If school is in session during a storm, the road crews shall give the highest priority to clearing the road for bus travel.
2. Upon meeting to begin a winter storm operation, the road crew shall plan a snow removal route that provides the most efficient coverage of the town roads.
3. The road crew shall use sand or a sand-salt-molasses mix on the roads to provide traction and melting.
4. The road crew shall be in radio contact during snow removal operations.
5. The road crew shall have cell phones during snow removal operations, with the numbers supplied to the selectboard and the town clerk.
6. The road crew is considered to be on call twenty-four hours a day during winter storm operations.
7. An operator may not work more than 12 hours continuous during a winter storm, without a 4 hour break.
8. Overtime is not permitted for an operator during winter storm operations, unless specifically authorized by the Selectboard under emergency conditions.
9. In no case shall an operator continue if overtired or fatigued.
10. During prolonged storms, consideration should be given to providing continual snow removal coverage by scheduling a single plow operator at one time.
11. The road crew shall exercise the utmost safety during snow removal. This includes:
  - a. Appropriate speed for conditions
  - b. Awareness of other drivers
  - c. Awareness of pedestrians, private snow plowers, children, or other types of vehicles that may use the road during a storm (snowmobiles, four-wheelers, etc).
  - d. Use of all available safety equipment
  - e. Be alert for obstructions
  - f. Wear protective clothing in case you have to exit the vehicle
  - g. Carry emergency equipment
  - h. Stopping if fatigue is a factor
12. The road crew is instructed to be very cautious near mail boxes. In most cases, a properly installed mail box will permit the plow and snow to clear the box. Mailboxes are seldom hit directly by the plow, but may be damaged by heavy

- snow hitting the box. Damage to mail boxes during snow removal is the responsibility of the property owner.
13. Snow removal from private driveways is not the responsibility of the Town of Panton.
  14. The road crew shall remove snow from the town hall parking lot.
  15. The Town of Panton is not responsible for windshield damage resulting from small stones that may be inadvertently kicked up by vehicles.

### **Directives- Continuing Winter Operations in Non-Storm Periods**

Once a storm has abated and the roads cleared, the road crew has additional responsibilities as follows.

1. Depending on the storm duration and hours worked, the road crew shall take time off to rest and avoid overtime.
2. The road crew shall wash all equipment.
3. The road crew shall inspect all equipment for damage, wear, or improper operation.
4. The road crew shall repair equipment where necessary.
5. The road crew shall take stock of material as the winter progresses to ensure that enough remains for the entire season.
6. If snow banks are high, the road crew shall push the banks back (wing or grader).
7. Particularly in the spring, ditches may have to have snow/slush removed to prevent water overrunning the road.
8. Clogged/frozen culverts shall be cleared.

### **Directives- Post Winter Operations**

Once the winter season is over, the road crew shall have the following responsibilities.

1. The road crew shall wash all equipment.
2. The road crew shall inspect all equipment for damage, wear, or improper operation.
3. The road crew shall repair equipment where necessary.
4. The road crew shall remove snowplows from the trucks.
5. Take stock of material left and use for planning purposes for the following fall.
6. The road crew shall perform a check of all roads to assess damage caused by winter plowing. This includes damage to the road surface itself, ditches, the town right-of-way, culverts, and guardrails.
7. The road crew shall remove snow fence.

### **Information and Complaints**

The Town of Panton appreciates constructive information about road conditions during winter storms. Information may be relayed directly to the road foreman, the town clerk or the Selectboard.

Complaints should be directed to the Selectboard in writing.

