

## City of Oneida- Winter Information

### Plowing the Roads:

The Department of Public Works acts as quickly as possible during inclement weather to assure the safety and clearance of all city streets for the use of emergency vehicles and citizens. Your patience, cooperation, and understanding will help the road crews to clear the roads faster and safer. When you are driving during snow removal operations, please be patient and give snow plows a wide berth. You should **NEVER** pass a snow plow unless indicated by the operator. Snow plows have limited visibility and must often make sudden moves to avoid parked cars and other roadside obstacles.

### Shoveling Your Sidewalk:

Homeowners are responsible for clearing snow and ice from the sidewalks in front of their property. Commercial businesses should keep sidewalks in front of their businesses free of snow and ice at all times between 9:00am and 5:00pm.

Placing snow in the sidewalk is prohibited and enforced per Section 180-32 of the City ordinance.

The Department of Public Works clears the sidewalks for all city-owned properties and parks. Public Works may also at times perform sidewalk plowing along main routes to accommodate residents during heavy snowfalls. Please note, this service is a courtesy performed during normal work hours after roadways have been cleared. The homeowner is still responsible for clearing their fronting sidewalk.

### Damage to Mail Boxes:

Property owners occasionally contact the Department of Public Works requesting that they be reimbursed for damaged or broken mail boxes. While any damage is an unintended consequence of clearing snow and ice, there is no statutory or legal responsibility which grants a property owner any right to place a mailbox within the Right-of Way. While property owners' may have an informal license, this does not endow the owner of the mailbox any legal rights in the highway when needed for highway purposes.

Highway Law Section 319 supports this policy as does an opinion from the Attorney General stating that, "The owner has no right to interfere with the speedy and efficient removal of snow by placing the mailbox in such position as to cause this result, and no liability results on the party of the public official charged with the duty on snow removal if such box is so placed that it may be injured by the proper highway maintenance." Property owners' may reduce the risk of mailbox damage due to snow and ice removal by ensuring their mailbox is properly erected. The US Postal Service may be consulted for general mailbox guidelines.

The Department appreciates your understanding in this matter and would like to remind all property owners that clearing the highways of snow and ice during the winter months is done with the intent of providing safe passage on city streets. The Department undertakes this mission so that everyone may travel safe, well maintained highways during the winter.

If a mailbox is damaged by a city snowplow during a snow event, the property owner can still submit a claim to the city's insurance company for a determination of any city negligence by submitting a written request to the Clerk's Office.

## **Shoveling Your Driveway**

If it is possible, wait to shovel out your driveway until after the snow plows pass through your street. If you cannot wait, shovel the entrance to your driveway last. If you shovel it first and a plow passes by while you shovel the rest, the snow that the plow is pushing will empty into the opening you just created.

Another important tip to make shoveling your driveway easier is to pile the snow on the opposite side of the snow plow's approach. On a standard two-way street this would be the right side of your driveway as you face the street. This way, when the plow passes by, less snow will be pushed back into your driveway.

It is a public hazard and against New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law to shovel snow into the street. This creates a slushy mix on the side of the road that the snow plows may not be able to reach due to parked cars or other roadside obstacles. If you use a snow blower, point the blower away from the street. The Police Department can cite citizens for shoveling or blowing snow into the street. If you hire a contractor to plow your driveway or shovel your walk, you should make certain that they do not plow or shovel snow into the street.

When shoveling, snow blowing or plowing, you cannot block visibility at a street corner or block pedestrian access to the sidewalk.

## **Parking Your Car:**

If you have a driveway, please use it to keep the streets as clear of obstacles as possible. When parking your car on the street during a snowstorm or prior to a forecasted snowstorm, park as close to the curb as possible. If possible, park so that another car is not directly across from you.

Parking is prohibited on the city streets between 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. between April 15<sup>th</sup> to October 15<sup>th</sup>. Limited overnight parking is available in certain posted municipal parking lots – See Section 180-21 of the City ordinance. Parking in the streets during or following snowfall hampers the snow plowing efforts, restricts traffic flow, and increases the potential for accidents. Please do not park vehicles across the sidewalk. NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law prohibits parking of vehicles on sidewalks. Cars that are parked in violation of these parking regulations will be ticketed and may be towed during a snow event.

## **We'll Work With You:**

If you have questions or concerns regarding snow removal, conduct of snow plows, parking during a snowstorm, or problems with snow removal on your street or neighborhood, please contact us at 315.363.7222. We will work with you to determine the source of the problem and the most appropriate resolution.