

Policy Title: Snow Clearing Policy	Policy Number: RD-1800
Approved by: Council RM of Fisher	Date of Most Recent Approval: January 5, 2022
Date of Original Approval: 2016 January 4	Resolution Number 234/20
DISCLAIMER: <i>If there is a discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.</i>	

Purpose

The intent of the Rural Municipality of Fisher is to maintain the municipal roads in a safe and passable condition. The services are not intended to eliminate all hazardous conditions on the roads at all times but to assist traffic in moving safely.

The purpose of this policy is to set direction for employees for clearing snow from municipal roads, to keep traffic moving safely, and to ensure access to emergency services by ratepayers.

Scope

This policy applies to all municipal roads in the Rural Municipality of Fisher.

Definitions

Access Roads is defined as unplowed roads.

Developed Road – Road that has been gravelled and grass has been maintained.

Major Storm Event shall mean rapid accumulation of snow causing road closures or more than 10 cm (4 inches) of snowfall.

Routine Maintenance shall mean the clearing of less than 6 cm (2.5 inches) of snowfall or accumulation, ice packed roads, ice packed intersections, and the widening of accumulated windrows on road shoulders.

Snow Ditching is the removal of snow from ditches to assist in spring drainage.

Snow Ridging is the creation of ridges of snow in fields adjacent to a road to prevent snow from drifting on the road.

Spring Clearing is snow clearing of access roads prior to spring thaw.

Storm Event shall mean a minimum of 6 cm to 10 cm (2.5 inches to 4 inches) of snowfall **or** severe winds causing drift accumulations of 6 cm to 10 cm (2.5 inches to 4 inches) or more.

Windrow is the ridge of snow left behind after a snow plow or grader passes by.

SNOW CLEARING POLICY

The Rural Municipality of Fisher will plow and/or remove snow and ice, as reasonably practical, on designated roads (see Map).

GUIDELINES

EMERGENCY SNOW CLEARING:

Snow clearing will be given highest priority at no cost for the emergent situations of medical emergencies or situations which may immediately jeopardize life or property. Emergencies do not include scheduled medical or dental appointments.

The Municipality encourages anyone who is receiving critical medical care, Lifeline, or Meals On Wheels to contact the municipal office to assist with coordination of snow removal plans.

SNOW CLEARING PROCESS:

➤ **Conditions Determining Snow Clearing:**

Snow clearing operations will be determined by the following conditions:

1. Major Storm Event
2. Storm Event
3. Routine Maintenance
4. Spring Opening

➤ **Working Hours:**

- The maximum shift should be 12 hours, with a minimum of 8 hours off between shifts (a shift is defined at the time the employee is on duty). The 12 hour limitation may be exceeded for medical emergencies and unexpected serious changes in road conditions.
- Snow clearing on weekends and holidays will occur on an as needed basis and if roads become impassible for emergency vehicles.

➤ **Target for Snow Clearing**

The target for clearing all municipal roadways to a passable state (possible single lane) is:

- Within 4 days of the conclusion of the Storm Event (estimated)

➤ **Commencement of Snow Clearing**

Major snowfalls or severe wind or blizzards will require more time but will be dealt with as quickly as possible. In these major storm events, snow plowing may commence prior to storm end (at the call of Council). Relief operators may be utilized and the hiring of additional equipment or contractors may occur, if necessary, to assist the Municipality in clearing the roads in a timely manner. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is authorized, following notification to the Reeve and Council members, to utilize relief operators and hiring of additional contractors when necessary to assist the Municipality in clearing the roads in a timely manner. In the event of a major storm event, grader operators will take machines home in anticipation of the following day storm.

➤ ***Snow Clearing Rotation***

The roads will be cleared in an organized efficient rotation starting in the north, central, or the south part of the municipality, without preference to any individual. The route will allow the grader operator to complete the route with the minimal amount of back tracking. The order in which roads have snow removed from them over the course of the winter shall be varied where possible; such that starting point alters between the north, centre, and the south part of the municipality. Where one area is serviced first following a storm, an alternative area shall be serviced first following the next storm and so on. The rotations may be altered depending on varying conditions throughout the municipality.

➤ ***Windrows***

Windrows of plowed snow across entrances to private yards resulting from plowing operations shall not be removed by the RM. Operators are to use their best judgement and ability to limit the size of windrows left on driveways by co-ordinating their speed or machine direction.

➤ ***Access – One Route Only***

For occupied residences that may be accessed by two or more routes, Council reserves the right to provide snow removal on one access route only.

➤ ***Routine Maintenance***

Routine Maintenance will be carried out on an as needed basis.

➤ ***Opening of Seasonal/Access Roads***

The regular opening of seasonal/access roads for one landowner's purpose will not be considered. Council may agree by resolution to open up a stretch of unplowed road for a ratepayer only once per winter season at municipal cost if fall conditions (i.e. excessive rainfall) warrant this consideration. The municipality will agree to open up a stretch of unplowed road for a ratepayer only once per winter season to provide him access to grain bins/piles or bale stacks on a 50/50 cost share basis. Subsequent openings of the same route will be at the landowners cost for the whole 100%. These requests will be tended to on a priority basis.

➤ ***Opening of Developed Road to allow for crop/bale removal from wild animal damage***

Upon direction from Councillor one developed road will be open to access farmers field to remove crop or bales that are being damaged due to wildlife. Grader Operators will not open any undeveloped road allowance that potentially can cause damage to municipal equipment. The municipality will open the road only once per season at no cost and subsequent openings will of the same route will be 100% the landowner's cost. The request will not take priority over residential snow clearing.

➤ **Deposits of Snow on Roadways/Shoulder by Ratepayers**

Ratepayers and contractors must understand that depositing snow upon a road or shoulder may be in contravention of The Highway Act. (See Policy Snow Left on Municipal Roads)

➤ **Priority Roads in storm events**

- 1.) Public Works/Water Treatment Plant Operator/Fire Chief (**IN A MAJOR STORM EVENT ONLY**)
- 2.) Medical List
- 3.) Bus Routes

SAFETY:

During severe weather or temperatures below -30° C, Council will determine whether or not municipal equipment will be used for snow removal.

Snow cleaning operations will not be undertaken when visibility is less than 300 metres.

Equipment will be called off the roads during unsafe conditions as determined by CAO.

SNOW DITCHING:

The Rural Municipality of Fisher will only undertake snow ditching in emergency circumstances as deemed necessary by Reeve and Council and where the real potential exists for property damage to homes, farm sites, or infrastructure.

SNOW RIDGING:

The Rural Municipality of Fisher will only undertake snow ridging if deemed necessary and with written permission of the landowner.

CULVERT STEAMING:

The Rural Municipality of Fisher will only undertake culvert steaming in emergency circumstances as deemed necessary by the Reeve and Council and where the real potential exists for property damage to homes, farm sites, or infrastructure.

PRIVATE SERVICES:

All other snow clearing requests from Councillors and residents should be directed to the Municipal Office where the requests will be communicated according to priority to the Public Works Department. These services may be scheduled after normal snow clearing is completed and will be billed accordingly.

OTHER:

If the municipality deems that snow clearing on private property to facilitate turning around of equipment, where it is determined to be easiest, quickest and most effective way for the operator to turn around, the services performed during the turnaround of the snow plow will not be charged to the resident.

By request, roadways to cemeteries for funerals will be cleared.