

TOWN OF EMPIRE

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – ROAD & BRIDGE

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL AND REMOVAL POLICY

The Public Works Department is responsible for snow and ice control and removal operations of 6.32 lane miles of town streets, approximately ½ mile of public sidewalks, and over 20,000 square feet of public parking lots on a priority basis. It is the department's goal to have all town streets and sidewalks maintained as soon as possible after the snow has stopped falling. The department will not maintain residential streets for snow events of less than four inches as determined by staff. Please remember that the more it snows, the longer it will take to plow the entire town.

Snow and ice control and removal services are provided primarily for community safety purposes, and secondly, for residents' convenience. The town will provide such control in a safe, efficient, timely, and cost-effective manner, keeping in mind safety, budget, personnel, and environmental concerns. The economic and social welfare of the town requires a balance between the level of service and the resources available to perform the service. The Public Works Department will prioritize snow and ice control and removal, however, there are daily responsibilities in addition to snowplowing, including maintenance for the Empire Municipal Utilities Water and Sewer Plants along with other town responsibilities.

Snow and ice control operations are expensive and involve the use of limited personnel and equipment. The Public Works Department currently employs two part-time Public Works employees. Snowplow frames are attached to the two town maintenance trucks, and the town ATV.

Operations will be conducted only when the weather conditions do not endanger the safety of the town's employees and equipment. Factors that may delay snow and ice control operations include but are not limited to severe cold temperatures, significant winds, limited visibility, Water or Sewer Plant emergencies, Fire or other Emergency Services, and CDOT road closure assistance.

SPECIFIC TOWN OF EMPIRE SNOW AND ICE CONTROL AND REMOVAL POLICIES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

*** INITIATION OF SERVICES**

The Public Works Department will decide when to begin snow and ice control and removal operations. The criteria for that decision are:

1. Snow accumulation of 4 inches or more.
2. Drifting of snow that causes problems for travel.
3. Icy conditions which seriously affect travel.
4. Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use of the streets.

*PRIORITIES AND ROUTES

1. All of the Town of Empire's roads and areas are categorized by the level of snow and ice control and removal efforts which will be devoted to them. The various levels of service, the roadways which fall within that level, and the degree of service which will be devoted to snow and ice control and removal operations on each level are identified below. The streets are to be maintained until the streets are deemed "passable" before proceeding to the next category of street priority. You can find the location of these routes on the Snowplow Route Map.

- Priority 1 Route 1 – Primary Roads for School and Public Transportation, and Access to Post Office: This classification includes all current town roads that may carry school bus and public transit routes, and the access road to the Empire Post Office. During school days, Primary Roads will be plowed to accommodate school bus schedules whenever possible. Current Road List: South Avery, South Ball, South Cowles, South Daily, East Hanchett, East Mountain, North Guanella.
- Priority 1 Route 2 – Primary Residential Roads: This classification includes the Primary Residential Roads in the town, which will be plowed immediately following the completion of Route 1. Current Road List: North and South Main, North and South Freeman, North Ball, North Cowles, North Daily, South Guanella, East and West Mountain, East and West Sunny, Cemetery Road, Snowplow Avenue.
- Priority 1 Route 3 – Secondary Residential Roads: Secondary Residential Roads will be plowed immediately following the completion of Route 2.
- Priority 2 Route 4 – Theobald Park Sidewalks and Parking Lot, Town Hall and Visitor Center Sidewalks: All sidewalks are Priority 2 and will be plowed after the resource requirements for the Primary and Secondary Roads are met.
- Priority 2 Route 5 – All Other Public Sidewalks: Public sidewalks run from Avery Street to Guanella Street on the south side of HWY 40.
- Priority 2 Route 6 – UV Plant Road & Sewer Plant Road.

2. As noted earlier, in the event that blizzard conditions exist with high winds, extremely low visibility, etc., the Town of Empire will not attempt to provide any snow and ice control and removal services for any of the above levels of service until the blizzard conditions have ended.

3. HWY 40 is maintained by Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), not by the Town of Empire. By law, the town is not allowed to perform snow and ice control and removal operations on the highway except in extreme conditions by request of Emergency Services. For further information about CDOT maintaining HWY 40 please visit [CDOT snow removal policy and information](#). For comments, questions, or concerns for CDOT please [submit a case online](#).

4. Nighttime snow and ice control and removal services will be performed only during: a fire when emergency responders cannot negotiate ice buildup, an emergency on the Interstate Highway when CDOT is requesting support, or for other short term multi-agency emergencies that the on-call Road and Bridge Supervisor deems necessary to respond to.

5. The Town of Empire will maintain the public sidewalks in the town. As there are a limited number of personnel available, the town will only maintain these sidewalks after the street plowing operations have ended.
6. The Town of Empire cannot plow private driveways as this constitutes spending public funds for private purposes. [C.R.S. 18-8-407](#). The only exception is in the case of a life-threatening emergency. Any emergency request will be forwarded to the Police Department for investigation and confirmation prior to the Town of Empire plowing any private driveways. In the case of a fraudulent emergency claim, prosecution will be pursued to the fullest extent of the law. [C.R.S. 18-8-111](#).
7. The practice of pushing snow onto or across the Town of Empire's roadways endangers the traveling public as well as plow truck operators. The Statutes of the State of Colorado make it unlawful to store snow on the public way. The Town of Empire's residents may receive a warning and/or summons for snow pushed onto the town's right-of-way from driveways, sidewalks, parking lots, etc. [C.R.S. 18-9-107](#); [C.R.S. 43-5-301](#).
8. When plowing snow on the first day of a storm, plow operators will make no attempt to angle plow blades away from driveways, unless the property owner is engaged in the process of digging out the driveway. This defeats our purpose of finishing the route in a timely fashion. However, during cleanup work, we will do our best not to re-deposit snow in front of driveway approaches. All plow drivers strive to keep as much snow as possible out of driveways after the first pass.
9. The Town of Empire will address problem areas such as access to the HWY 40 crosswalk, isolated slick spots, etc. only after all town roads are open for traffic. The town provides a mixture of sand and salt in "Salt Dog" containers throughout town that are available for you to use on the streets, street intersections, or sidewalks when there is hazardous ice or slippery driving conditions. You can find the location of these containers on the Snowplow Route Map.
10. Given the topographic and remote characteristics of the town roads, and the possible diverse weather conditions, all motorists are expected to have their vehicles equipped with tire chains and adequate snow tires during inclement weather.
11. The Town of Empire will not provide towing service for private or public vehicles which are stuck in the snow or have run off the road.
12. When it is snowing or a snowstorm has been forecast, please remove your vehicles from the street, especially the street parking on HWY 40. If vehicles are left in the street, the plows must go around them. This slows the snow removal operation, increases the chance of accidents, and will increase the amount of snow that you need to shovel in order to move your vehicle. CDOT will tow your vehicle if it is impeding their plowing on HWY 40. Street parking throughout town is limited to 72 hours, and there should be no overnight parking in the Theobald Parking Lot. Town of Empire Ordinance 255, Article I, Section 5.1.2.