

TOWN OF SOMERS

WINTER OPERATIONS
GUIDELINES

SOMERS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
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SOMERS, CONNECTICUT
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PURPOSE

The goal and intent of the Somers Department of Public Works is to maintain a safe road network by providing an efficient and effective snow and ice removal program. New England weather is unpredictable, and the unique nature of each storm event may dictate variations to the following policy.

The purpose of this report is to outline the general snow removal procedures of the Town, in addition to providing suggestions on how you, the residents, can help us in this effort. It is our hope that the Town's efforts, along with the cooperation and assistance of an informed public, will result in a safe winter season with minimal disruptions to ongoing daily activities.

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL PLAN

- **STATE ROADS:**

The State of Connecticut Department of Transportation maintains some major roads in Town. Two regional offices split the maintenance of these roads.

East Windsor Office (860)623-4473:

- Hall Hill Road (Conn. Rt. 186)
- Springfield Road (Conn. Rt. 83, north of Main Street)
- Turnpike Road (Conn. Rt. 525)
- Main Street west of Springfield Road (Conn. Rt. 190)
- Bilton Road from the Prison entrance to the Enfield Line (Conn Rt. 404)

Vernon Office (860)875-4993:

- South Road (Conn. Rt. 83, south of Main Street)
- Main Street east of Springfield Road (Conn. Rt. 190)

Please call the above offices for issues on State roads.

- **TOWN ROADS**

The Town of Somers maintains the remainder of the roads (approximately 180 lane miles).

The road network is divided into eight (9) main plow routes, with four (3) supplemental routes. A town truck is assigned to each route. The drivers consist of Town employees from the Department of Public Works, and qualified part time drivers who are called in for storm events.

In recent years, the Town has been using treated salt. We use these products because they are effective at lower temperatures, less corrosive than conventional salt, and give us better performance at lower application rates. You may notice us applying treated salt prior to the storm. This helps to prevent snow and ice from bonding to the surface. Special attention is given to the mountainous areas where lower temperatures and steeper grades can make road conditions more challenging.

As accumulations approach a plowable amount, our plowing efforts commence. Centers of the roads are opened first, to maintain access for traffic and emergency vehicles, and then roads are cleaned curb to curb. We open primary roads first and local roads second.

After the plowing operation, another application of salt may be applied to prevent black ice or the refreezing of melting snow. Some areas are prone to drifting, and plowing may be needed in these areas again.

Parking lots and walkways for Town buildings and facilities are also cleared; efforts are made to complete this before regular opening times (Town Hall, Piedmont Hall, Kibbe Fuller, Historical Museum, Senior Center, Police Station, Fire Department, Library, Village Players, Mill Pond, Sewer Plant, Recycling Center, Animal Control, DPW, Sidewalks, etc.).

ON STREET PARKING

Section 192-9 of the Town Code states "No vehicle shall be parked on the streets of Somers during a snow or ice storm which has been in progress three (3) hours. No vehicle shall be parked or left on the traveled portion of a street or highway so as to impede normal snow plowing operations and the free flow of traffic during snow storms." Fines may be issued for violation of this Ordinance. Vehicles may also be towed and impounded at the expense of the owner.

ROAD RIGHT OF WAY

Prior to the winter season, please remove any items from the road and tree belt (basketball hoops, soccer goals, etc.). The Town's Right-of-Way for most roads is 50 feet. Generally, the Town's Right-of-Way extends 13' beyond the edge of the road. The Town is not responsible for damage to any items on within the Right-of-Way.

TRASH PICKUP

If you have waste disposal pick up, please do not place your trash receptacle out on the road overnight if a storm is anticipated. If possible, do not put out your trash receptacle until your road has been plowed. The Town assumes no responsibility for damage trash receptacles.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The office of the Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with DPW and School staff, may delay, close, or early-release school. Information regarding school closings, delays or early releases may be obtained from radio, TV or the Internet.

DRIVEWAY CLEARING TIPS

Homeowners are responsible for clearing their own driveways. When removing snow from the entrance of your driveway, place the snow on the left side (as you face your driveway from the road) of the driveway (**see attached snow-clearing tips**). This will prevent the added snow from being plowed back into your driveway during the road plowing operation. It is a violation of CT law to shovel or plow snow into the road, and doing so creates a safety hazard.

MAILBOXES

It is the policy of the Somers Department of Public Works that if any mailbox or post is damaged as the result of snow removal operations, the responsibility for making repairs shall be borne by the property owner. The Department of Public Works is not responsible for mailbox damage as a result of snow being discharged from snow removal equipment.

When a mailbox or post is damaged by **direct contact** from our snow removal equipment, the following will occur.

1. Inspection of mailbox and post to determine cause of damage.
2. Determination of responsibility (improper installation of mailbox, rotted mailbox post, or plow operator error).
3. If the investigation determines it was operator error, the mailbox or post will be repaired or replaced with a standard metal mail box and/or standard wooden post of \$25.00 in value maximum. The DPW will only replace the mailbox or post if the plow equipment has made **direct contact** with the box or post.

***The majority of mailbox and post damage is the result of improper installation or maintenance. A properly installed and maintained mailbox will withstand the snow removal operations that occur during the winter months. (See attached Installation Guide)**

CATCH BASINS AND STORM INLETS

You can help the Town to minimize street flooding by shoveling snow and ice off-of catch basin grates near your house. DPW personnel perform this task on a regular basis, but with over 1750 catch basins in Town, it is impossible for us to ensure that all are cleared on a continual basis. Please report any excessive flooding to the DPW at (860)763-8234, or email publicworks@somersct.gov.

SIDEWALK CLEARING

Section 172-3 of the Town Code states that the owner or occupant of any premises where there is a public sidewalk must remove the snow and/or ice from the sidewalk within 12 hours of the event causing said snow or ice. Fines may be issued for violation of this Ordinance.

FIRE HYDRANT CLEARING

Please make every effort to clear fire hydrants on or in front of your property. This will aid the Fire Department in the event of a fire. Clearing around the hydrant with a path to the road helps protect the safety of you and your neighbors.

POTHOLES

Potholes are formed when water that has entered cracks in the road freezes and thaws. This action breaks up the pavement surface. Traffic loosens the pavement more, displaces the underlying gravel, and eventually a hole is created. Patching of potholes continues throughout the winter with the use of cold patch for temporary repairs. Permanent repairs are made in the summer when hot asphalt is available. Please report any potholes to the DPW at (860)763-8234, or email publicworks@somersct.gov .

WINTER DRIVING TIPS

- If at all possible, stay off the roads during storm events
- Check for adequate tread on your tires.
- Keep a folding shovel and some sand in your trunk.
- Clean your vehicle of all snow and ice especially around all lights.
- Keep a safe distance from plow trucks, and all vehicles.
- Allow extra time to reach your destination.

WINTER SAND

Winter sand/salt mix is available to Somers Residents at the Animal Control Building. The Animal Control Building is next to the Transfer Station at 111 Egypt Road. **No contractors please!**

FIELD ROAD PARK

Upper Field Road Park is open all year. The upper parking lot and playground remains open throughout the winter months for your enjoyment. Please note; that the bathroom facilities, ball fields, and lower Field Road Park are closed in late November and reopened at the beginning of April.

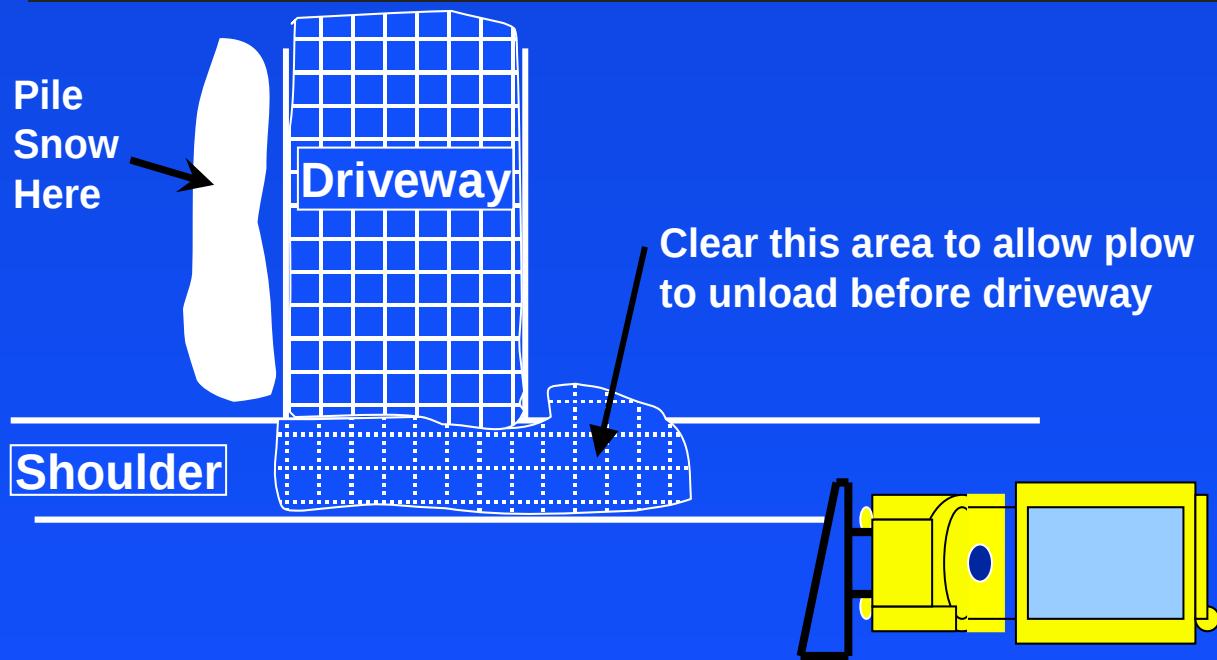
The Park is one of the last areas to be plowed and may not be plowed for some time after the storm. Please use care when going to the Park.

The Department of Public Works recommends that you do not drive or park at the Field Road Park until the snow has been removed both for safety reasons and to make the snow removal operation easier by not packing the snow down with your wheels.

SNOW REMOVAL FACTS AND FIGURES

Miles of Roads	90
Number of Buildings / Parking Lots Serviced	11
Cemeteries Serviced	4
Average annual snowfall in inches	49
Number of plow and salt routes	12
Tons of salt used per year	1,500

Public Reminder for Driveway Clearing



Somers Snow Clearing Tips

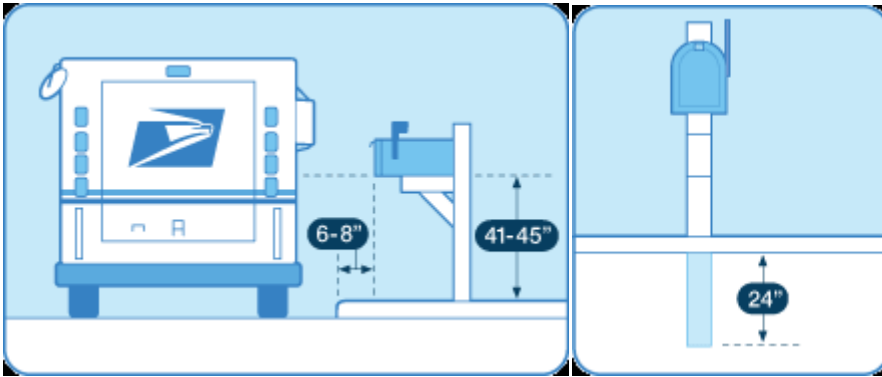
1. Never plow, place or allow your contractor to put snow in the roadway. It creates a hazard for the other drivers as well as school buses and emergency equipment.
2. If you don't want the plows to deposit snow in front of your driveway, clear the shoulder before your driveway as pictured above.
3. If there is a sidewalk in front of your home, please clear it of snow and ice within 12 hours of the end of the storm event.
4. If there is a fire hydrant in front of your house please clear the snow from around it. That way in the event of a fire the fire department will be able to hook-up and respond quickly.

Mailbox Installation Guide

Your local postmaster must approve the location of your mailbox.

Put a roadside mailbox where a carrier can reach inside without leaving the truck. That means positioning it about 41" to 45" off the ground and back about 6" to 8" from the curb.

If you live in the city and are attaching the box to your house, just make sure it can be accessed easily from your sidewalk, steps, or porch. Because city carriers often shoulder heavy bags, put your mailbox about 4' from the ground. That way, your carrier won't have to stretch or bend to reach it. And remember to keep the path to your mailbox clear in inclement weather.



The Post

If you're mounting a curbside mailbox on a post near the street, the support should be secure and safe. The best supports are designed to bend or fall away if a car hits them.

The Federal Highway Administration recommends...

- a wooden mailbox support no bigger than 4" x 4".
- a 2"-diameter standard steel or aluminum pipe.

Bury your post no more than 24" deep, so it can give way in an accident.

Don't use potentially dangerous supports, such as...

- heavy metal pipes.
- concrete posts.
- farm equipment, such as milk cans filled with concrete.

In areas with lots of snow, we suggest a semi-arch or extended arm-type support. That way, snowplows will be able to sweep under without knocking it down.