



TOWN OF SANDWICH

8 MAPLE STREET ~ PO BOX 194
SANDWICH, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03227

ORDINANCE RELATIVE TO WINTER MAINTENANCE

I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to RSA 231:92-a, the Sandwich Board of Selectmen hereby establish the following Winter Maintenance Ordinance, which outlines the Town of Sandwich (Town)'s policy and procedures for winter and inclement weather road maintenance.

As the Highway Department prepares for winter, we would like to remind the residents of Sandwich and the general motoring public the Town's Winter Maintenance Ordinance. The Highway Department uses this ordinance to establish guidelines regarding the treatment of roads, and the Highway Department's response to winter weather events.

We ask that residents and guests be patient during winter weather events as there is a pre-determined priority to the maintenance and treatment of roads. Please remember that not everyone can be first on the list. Plow routes are set up to maximize the effective, efficient, and safe use of the equipment avoiding unnecessary use of equipment. We also want to ensure the safety of our residents, guests, and emergency vehicles. The Highway Department maintains seventy (70) miles of town roads. At present, there are five (5) plow routes and one (1) route for parking lots and sidewalks. Appendix A – Route Map.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this ordinance is to provide guidance regarding the activities and responsibilities for those who deal with winter's inclement weather conditions in and for the Town. It is the intent of this ordinance to state the Board of Selectmen's commitment to provide appropriate responses to winter inclement weather conditions – ice, snow, and other inclemency's – within the limitations of the Town's means and abilities to meet this goal. The Board of Selectmen and the Highway Department recognize the importance of a logical, organized, and structured approach to maintaining the Town's roads, access to buildings, sidewalks, Town Beach (Squam Lake only) and outdoor skating rink in a passable, usable and safe condition.

To implement this ordinance, the Board of Selectmen and the Road Agent established the priorities set forth in Section V; however, inclement weather can be unpredictable and variable. Therefore, the Board of Selectmen authorize the use of maximum discretion by the appropriate Town officials or employees to modify the stated priorities as conditions warrant or require.

III. GOAL

The Highway Department's goal is to have every town road plowed, sanded or otherwise treated and returned to a safe and passable condition within twelve (12) hours following the end of a storm event. Thereafter, the Highway Department is committed to maintaining that condition on all maintained roads within the reasonable and necessary constraints of safe operation, and the availability of resources.

IV. EXECUTION

This ordinance, including the standard operating procedures set forth below, will serve as the normal operation procedures for winter maintenance, snow removal, and/or ice control for the Town of Sandwich. One or more of the following events or circumstances may affect all or any part of this ordinance by delaying or preventing its implementation:

- Equipment breakdown
- Snow accumulation in excess of one inch per hour
- Traffic congestion
- Emergencies
- Illness or absence of personnel
- Extensive operations requiring long hours of continuous service

V. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. LEVEL OF SERVICE: The Road Agent, or his/her designee, may, at his/her discretion based on weather reports elect not to remove snow until there is greater or lesser accumulation than the Town's policy, which is to start snow removal operations upon accumulation of three (3) inches of snow.

During a storm event, it is not practical or reasonable to try to maintain a snow- and ice-free road or sidewalk; therefore, the objective is to provide practical and safe road travel during a storm event within the confines of budget limitations. Due to the many variables inherent to New England weather, each storm or weather event may require slightly different efforts and/or emphasis on any number of maintenance tasks, which when combined, will determine the overall winter maintenance, snow removal and ice control strategy.

B. PLOWING PRIORITY: As the Highway Department deploys its personnel and equipment, the roads will be maintained in a predetermined priority regardless of the type of weather event. With approximately 60 miles of Town roads from which to remove snow and ice and limited equipment to handle those responsibilities, the Highway Department assigns priorities for our plowing routes in order to maximize the effectiveness of their efforts. At present, there are five (5) plow routes and one (1) route for parking lots and sidewalks.

1. School bus routes have first priority during school days when the Highway Crew has been dispatched by the Road Agent. Each plow route will ensure

that the best possible snow clearance and treatment, if required, will be completed within one half hour of bus route time.

2. High traffic routes
3. Public parking area at Town Hall, Fire Stations, Park and Recreation parking area, Police Station, and sidewalks. Sidewalks will be cleared and treated, if required, prior to the start and end of the school day.

C. EQUIPMENT AND MANPOWER: The Highway Department utilizes all assets needed to address snow and ice emergencies. The assets may vary from year-to-year based on changes in equipment inventory.

In addition to Highway Department personnel, private contractors under contractual agreement with the Town of Sandwich will be used to plow some of the Town roads and parking lots on an as needed basis.

D. SANDING MATERIALS: The Highway Department uses approximately 60 tons of salt and 1,500 yards of sand each season.

E. COMMUNICATIONS: The Highway Department rolling assets are equipped with two-way radios capable of transmitting and receiving on a frequency of 151.100. Each employee is assigned a unique call number. Most private contractors working for the town communicate with the Highway Department using cell phones. The Highway Department maintains communications from the garage, and Police Highway Department dispatch.

The Superintendent of Schools or a designated official representative shall contact the Road Agent prior to 4:30 A.M. to determine the condition of the municipality's roads in order to determine the safety of students using school buses. The school representative shall make the decision to cancel or postpone school for that day.

F. ROADS NOT RECEIVING WINTER MAINTENANCE: The Town of Sandwich does not maintain some roadways as part of its ongoing winter maintenance activities. The areas not maintained by the town include:

- Town roads classified as Class VI
- Sandwich Notch Road
- Private roads

G. DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY: The municipality is not held responsible for damage to private property that is located within the public right of way. The right-of-way (ROW) is often 50 wide, and is often confused by property owners as their own property. In most cases, the ROW extends to 10 to 20 feet on either side of the paved or gravel road. Property owners often cultivate extensions of their lawns, place mailboxes, erect fences and/or build stonewalls in this area. Although these enhancements greatly improve the appearance of the road, they can be problematic and

counter to good roadway maintenance. Landowners need to understand that the enhancements may be in the Town's ROW.

Property owners should not put bulk mulch, crushed rock, stonewalls, fences (visible and invisible), irrigation systems, trees or lawns in the Town's ROW. The town is not liable for damage that may occur to property in its ROW. Many items interfere with heavy equipment and become a hazard for vehicles and pedestrians causing drainage failures and eventually causing road deterioration.

Mailboxes are permitted within the right of way for the purpose of convenience at the property owner's risk. The United States Postal bulletin #22102 states: "The Postal Service suggest using a semi-arch or extended arm support which allows snowplows to sweep near or under mailboxes without damaging supports and provides easy access to the mailboxes by carriers and customers."

1. Mailboxes should be installed at least three (3) feet from the edge of the travel way.
2. Installations should be sufficiently sturdy to withstand the weight of heavy snow resulting from plowing operations.

H. PLACEMENT OF SNOW UPON ROADS AND SIDEWALK: No snow is to be shoveled, blown, plowed or placed by any means onto the town roads or sidewalks or plowed across roadways to the opposite side of the road unless it is immediately cleaned up/removed to eliminate any danger or hazard to the public or to town vehicles. Pursuant to RSA 41:11 and RSA 47:17, any person violating this provision of the ordinance shall be subject to a penalty of \$100 for the first offense, \$500 for the second offense, and \$1,000 for the third offense.

I. POST STORM OPERATIONS: As determined by the Road Agent or his/her designee, snow banks resulting from previous accumulations will be pushed back or shoveled using the plow and wings of the dump trucks, grader or loader in order to make space for the future snowstorms.

J. WEIGHT LOAD LIMITS: Pursuant to NH RSA 231:190 and 191, the Board of Selectmen have the authority to enact maximum weight load limits on Class IV, V and VI highways, both seasonally and year-round. The load limit is especially critical during the months of March, April and May due to the freeze-thaw cycle to prevent unreasonable damage and/or excessive municipal maintenance expense.

As determined by the Road Agent and the Board of Selectmen, load limits will be posted at the entrance to the specified roads and notifications will also be posted on the Town's website.

Exemptions: Exemptions with or without any appropriate conditions may be granted by the Board of Selectmen and/or Road Agent and will be posted at the Highway Garage and at Town Hall upon issuance. Exemptions may be verbal (one-time event and will only be given by the Road Agent and posted at the Highway Garage) or

seasonal, which will be in the form of a permit to be kept with the vehicle(s) and will be posted at the Highway Garage and at Town Hall. Exemption guidelines will vary by permit, but in general may address when to travel, what roads to use, weather conditions, etc. The following are examples of those who are subject to seasonal and verbal exemptions: fuel trucks, septic haulers, delivery and moving companies, maple sugar producers and maple sap haulers. Permit applications are available at the Highway Garage or the Selectmen's Office.

Damage to Roads: On the occasion that an individual or company does not comply with posted weight limits resulting in damage to the Town's roads, this ordinance and subsequent fine schedule will be enforced by any sworn police officer, Road Agent and/or the Board of Selectmen. Said individual or company shall also be liable for the cost of restoring the road to a satisfactory condition as determined by the Road Agent and/or Board of Selectmen.

Load Limit Violation (as determined by any sworn police officer, Road Agent and/or Board of Selectmen)

First Offense:	\$100
Second Offense:	\$300
Third Offense:	\$500

This ordinance shall be in effect upon its passage. Passed and approved this 28th day of February, 2022. This ordinance shall remain in effect until amended or rescinded.

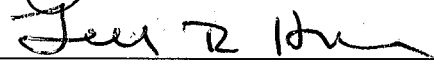
QUESTIONS AND/OR CLARIFICATIONS RELATED TO THIS POLICY

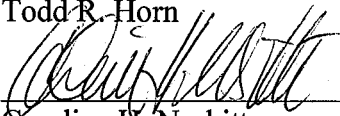
All questions and/or clarifications of this policy and its related content should be addressed to the Board of Selectmen, who shall be responsible for the administration, revision, interpretation, and application of this policy.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

Date: 28 FEB 2022 / Signed copy on file in the Selectmen's Office


Joanne D. Haight, Chairman


Todd R. Horn


Caroline H. Nesbitt

Date Adopted: February 22, 2022

Originally approved and adopted on **January 29, 2018**. History of changes provided below.

This Policy reviewed, revised and updated on:

- November 2019: revised vehicles / equipment, plow routes and public parking areas
- February 2022: removed vehicles/equipment list, removed local newspaper as public notice source, added Sandwich Notch Road as unmaintained in the winter.