

**City of Hokah**  
**Snow Removal Policy**  
**January 2009**

Due to its geographic location, Hokah Minnesota is subject to freezing rain, ice and snow storms at any time during the fall, winter and spring months. Just like each snowflake is different, each storm also has unique characteristics; climatological factors such as storm intensity and duration, wind, temperature and moisture content affect the total amount of snow/ice accumulation and influence the methodology used to combat the resulting snow and/or ice related road conditions.

The Street Department endeavors to maintain adequate traction for vehicles properly equipped for winter driving conditions. This does not mean bare dry pavement could be expected after each snowfall. Furthermore, this does not mean that the streets will be free of ice and snow. The public is encouraged to exercise extreme caution during these months in order to make travel within the City as safe as possible under the usually difficult circumstances accompanying Minnesota winters.

Following is the standard snow removal policy  
that will normally be used to maintain City streets:

- *Normal snow fall (1" to 6", with little winds) it will take approximately 8 to 10 hours, to completely open all streets in the city.*
- *Heavier snow fall (4" and up, with heavy winds) it will take approximately 10 to 12 hours to have all streets opened completely. It could take up to 24 hours to have all streets completely opened, and intersections cleaned.*
- *The end result of snow removal for the City is to have all streets and alleys cleared. Within 72 hours snow will be removed from the downtown business district by loading and hauling to an off-site area.*
- *Snow removal will start as soon as possible, as determined by the Maintenance Department. Work can start at any time of the day or night, and will continue until completed.*

It is important to note that the City's snow removal operations vary depending on the amount of snow, the nature of the storm, availability of staff, and most importantly the timing of the storm.

Snow removal operations during the early morning hours are more efficient than snow removal during the day because there is less traffic hampering the operation of snow removal equipment, especially in the downtown area. Unfortunately no one can control the timing of a snowstorm. If the snow continues to accumulate through the morning hours, the snow removal operations need to be adjusted accordingly.

Usually City employees from the Street, Water and Wastewater Departments begin to haul snow from Main Street at 4:00 AM. They will be assisted by the Police Department when available for vehicle removal and traffic control. Unlike other parts of the community where the snow is pushed off the streets onto the curb area, snow in the downtown area must be hauled away. Snow removal requires more and larger equipment, including a grader, a snow blower attached to a loader and several dump trucks ready to haul the snow from the downtown area. It is hazardous to have this

equipment blocking the downtown streets during the day when vehicular traffic increases. Snow in the downtown travel lanes is plowed into the parking lanes, sometimes making it difficult to park in the downtown area that day. The snow in the parking lanes is then removed as soon as possible with every effort to complete this in the next three days, but only after all downtown businesses (including bars) are closed.

Our goal is prompt and efficient snow removal, however some things like the timing of snowfall and budget restraints are beyond our control. The City snow crew asks for your patience and understanding in these situations.

### **Clearing Sidewalks**

The City of Hokah requires that owners and occupants of properties that have a sidewalk must clear the sidewalk of snow and ice, and shall after every snowfall clear the snow from the sidewalk within 24 hours. Violators may be cited, or the City of Hokah may clear the sidewalk at the property owner's expense.

### **Winter Parking Rules**

City of Hokah ordinance prohibits parking on all city Streets during periods of snow removal. Vehicles parked in violation may receive a citation. Vehicles which have not been removed within 12 hours of the issuance of a ticket may be impounded and towed away resulting in the owner being assessed fines, towing costs and storage.

### **A Few Things You Can Do To Help Us Help You**

- *When it begins to snow, please remove all vehicles from the street*
- *Keep small children inside when snow equipment is operating in your neighborhood*
- *Trim low hanging branches 14 feet above the street to prevent damage to plow trucks*
- *Shovel the snow away from fire hydrants near your home for public safety*
- *Shovel the snow away from catch basins in the street so melting snow can run off*
- *Do not pass a plow or sander and keep back a minimum of 50 feet*
- *Please do not blow/shovel snow into the street. Our maintenance staff work long hours clearing the streets and blowing/shoveling the snow into the street becomes a driving hazard*
- *Snow plowing by its nature is inherently dangerous. While we make every effort to protect your property, damage can and does occur. It is your responsibility to repair the affected area. Remember, city streets have a right-of-way of 66 feet*
- *Vehicle equipment. Snow tires, tire inflation, all wheel drive, winter safety kits*

### **Snow Shoveling Tips**

- *PUSH, don't lift. If you lift, lift with your legs not your back*
- *Take breaks and stretch. Pause every 5 minutes to stand up straight and stretch.*
- *Don't do the bend and twist. Move in the direction that you're shoveling.*
- *Don't force it. For snow blowers, let the machine do the work, don't wrestle it.*