

# Gregory County Snow & Ice Removal Policy

KELSEA SUTTON GREGORY COUNTY COMMISSION THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2017

**Policy Statement:** It is the policy of the Gregory County Highway Department to remove snow from the County roads safely and quickly; to provide reasonable ice control; and to do so while taking into consideration the availability of labor, equipment, and funding. This policy includes general guidelines followed by the Gregory County Highway Department and its operations for sanding and snow removal.

**Operating Hours:** Normal working hours are Monday through Thursday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Work outside of those hours, including early mornings, evenings and weekends is at the discretion of the Highway Superintendent. Typically, during and after a storm, snow removal and sanding operations will be conducted between the hours of 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Exceptions for extreme weather conditions and circumstances will be determined by the Superintendent.

**Adverse Conditions:** You can expect that equipment will not be dispatched when low visibility or other conditions present significant risks to operators and other motorists that outweigh the benefits of clearing snow and removing ice. Generally, equipment will not be dispatched when the estimated visibility is less than 500 feet. These decisions are judgment calls to be made by the Superintendent.

**Route Priorities:** The priority in which roads are plowed and in what sequence is weather dependent and will vary. You can expect, however, that the road priorities will generally follow these guidelines: 1. Major Collector Routes (county road primary commuter routes); 2. Minor Collector Routes (the remaining paved and gravel county roads); 3. Local Roads (township roads).

**Levels of Service:** Gregory County does not have a “bare pavement” or “bare road” policy, and *does not guarantee* roads will be free of snow or ice. The following are general snow and ice removal policies: 1. Snow and ice removal may be limited to daylight hours, depending on weather conditions; 2. Snow will be removed as efficiently and completely as possible; 3. Snow removal will begin typically after 6” has accumulated on gravel roads; 3. Sanding of the roads will be done at critical intersections, hills, curves, and other hazardous areas; 4. Equipment may not be operating when the wind is blowing over 25 mph.

**Rural Mailboxes:** The County will not repair mailboxes unless actual contact is made by a snow removal unit. Gregory County will not repair mailboxes damaged by snow as it is being removed from

the roadway. Repairs to mailboxes hit by snow removal equipment will be performed by Highway Department personnel. Existing mailboxes and posts will be reused if possible. If the existing materials are significantly damaged, the replacement box will be a standard metal box and the post will be a standard breakaway post, meeting federal highway standards. If it cannot be replaced because the ground is frozen, a temporary mailbox will be used until spring.

**Obstructions:** Personal property on the road right of way like hay bales, vehicles, or fences that might cause drifting must be removed by the owners according to the following guidelines: 1. Hay bales must be removed from the right of way before November 1st, after that time the county may remove the bales or burn them; 2. The county is not liable for damage to stalled or stranded vehicles or other obstructions that will interfere with snow and ice removal. The owners of stalled or stranded vehicles should immediately notify the Sheriff's Department. Depending on the circumstances, your vehicle may be towed; 3. Vehicles will not be parked on the roadway surface or shoulder; 4. If a vehicle is parked in a personal driveway, it should be outside of the roadway clear zone (typically 15-20 feet from the edge of the roadway); 5. The County will not operate snow removal equipment on private roads.

**Snow on Roadway:** County residents should avoid adding to the hazards of winter driving by not placing snow from their driveway onto public roads and right of way. Snow that is dumped, plowed, pushed or blown on to the roadway can create a serious hazard for motorists and for snow plow equipment. SDCL § 31-32-3.1 prohibits dumping any load of any material within the public road right of way, and makes a violation a misdemeanor. Piles of snow left on or near the road can freeze into a dangerous solid mass. Accidents and damages caused by snow piles placed in the roadway could result in property owner liability.