

CITY OF MERIDEN

SNOW AND MORE

Information on snow plowing, parking bans, leaf collection and more



This document was prepared by the City of Meriden Public Works Department and contains information regarding snow removal, parking bans, leaf and Christmas tree collection, and other important information.

Goals

The goals of the City of Meriden snow and ice control operations are to provide cost effective clearing and removal of snow and ice from City streets, to minimize the hazards of slippery road conditions encountered by both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, to reduce economic losses associated by workers unable to reach their destination, and to restore traveling conditions throughout the City in the shortest time possible after completion of each storm event.

Winter Parking Ban

Parked vehicles are the biggest obstacle to effective snow removal. Please support our efforts by parking your vehicle in conformance with Chapter 200, Section 200-25 (C) which states:

- Parking any vehicle on any public street or highway from November 1 to March 15 during any snow, sleet or freezing rain storm is prohibited.
- The parking of any vehicle on the streets during a snowstorm or until the snow has been completely cleared from the streets following a storm is prohibited between midnight and 7:00 A.M.

Additionally,

- The Director of Public Works may declare a parking ban.
- Residents are asked to remove vehicles from the street prior to the start of a snowstorm. This makes plowing safer, more efficient and cost effective.
- Information regarding storm specific parking bans is reported to the following television stations and radio station:
 - WFSB – Channel 3
 - WTNH – Channel 8
 - WVIT – Channel 30
 - WTIC – Channel 61
 - WTIC – AM 1080

Sidewalk Clearing

Residents are reminded that Section 180-44 of the City Code requires the owner or the owner's agent of any premises abutting upon any street or public place in the city where there is a sidewalk to remove snow from the sidewalk within 12 hours after sunrise. Failure to comply with this ordinance may result in a fine.

Section 180-45 of the City Code requires the owner or the owner's agent of any premises abutting upon any street or public place in the city where there is a sidewalk covered with ice, within the space of six hours thereafter and during the daytime, to make the sidewalk safe and convenient by removing the ice and covering the sidewalk with sand or a similar product and renew the application as often as may be needed to keep the sidewalk safe and convenient.

Section 180-48 of the City Code prohibits the depositing of snow or ice into any city street in a manner that may impede or cause inconvenience to public travel.

Please remember that the final snow plow pass is not made until the storm has ended. The final pass will result in snow being re-deposited onto your sidewalk or into your driveway if you have deposited this snow onto the City street. Your cooperation in clearing the sidewalks is an essential safety measure for children and other pedestrians using the sidewalks.

School Closings and Delays

Information regarding school closings and delays is reported to the following sources:

Radio – WTIC 1080 AM; WTIC 96.5 FM; Z 93.7 FM; WRCH 100.5 FM; WELI 960 AM; WDRC 102.9 FM; WDRC 1360 AM; WKCI 101.3 FM; WKSS 95.7 FM, WWYZ 92.5 FM; WRYM 840 AM (Spanish); WMMW 1470 AM

Television – Channel 3, Channel 8, Channel 30

Mailboxes

While plow truck drivers make every effort to avoid mailboxes, they do, on occasion, hit or knock one over. Operators must report these incidents to their supervisor. It is also possible that mailboxes can be knocked over by heavy snow without the operator's knowledge.

It is the City's policy to replace a mailbox struck by a City vehicle if the mailbox was mounted on a sturdy post and located in accordance with U.S. Postal Service (USPS) standards. The post office will not deliver mail until the mailbox is replaced. These standards are summarized below:

- The bottom of the mailbox shall be 3-1/2 to 4 feet from ground level.
- The face of the mailbox shall be flush with the back of the curb or set back 6 to 12 inches from the edge of the road.
- All mailboxes should have a handle, flag, and the house number on the right side as you face it from the street.
- Customers must keep the approach to their mailbox clear of obstructions to allow safe access for delivery. If the USPS employees are impeded in reaching a mailbox, the Postmaster may withdraw delivery service.
- Curbside mailboxes must be installed to allow safe and convenient delivery by carriers without leaving their vehicles.

Fire Hydrants

Owners of property and occupants of buildings that have a fire hydrant located in front of it are requested to clear a four-foot area in all directions around the hydrant and a three-foot wide path from the street to the fire hydrant. The Fire Department counts on hydrants being cleared of snow to help protect your safety.

Catch Basins and Storm Inlets

Help minimize street flooding by shoveling snow and ice from in front of the catch basin/storm inlet nearest your house. This includes keeping catch basin grates free of leaves and other debris all year long.

Snow Plowing

Please keep a minimum of 75 feet from snow plowing equipment.

During snowstorms, City crews plow based on established City priorities: main roads (i.e. East Main Street, West Main Street), followed by secondary streets (i.e. Paddock Avenue, Hanover Street) followed by residential subdivisions. A single pass in either direction may occur on a residential subdivision street until the snowfall ends. Then all roads are plowed curb to curb.

Anti-Icing

Anti-icing refers to a collection of strategies and techniques used to prevent snow from bonding to the road surface. Salt and salt brine is applied to the road surface in advance of the storm. The salt lowers the freezing temperature of water and prevents ice from bonding to the road. De-icing, in contrast, refers to snow and ice removal after bonding has occurred.

Anti-icing creates brine on the road surface that acts as a barrier between falling snow and the pavement. Snow may accumulate on the road surface, but because of the barrier snow won't bond to it.

The key to anti-icing is the application of the salt. Timing is everything: if the salt is applied to the road too soon, the resulting brine may freeze as the falling snow dilutes it. If it is applied too late after the storm begins, snow will have already bonded to the road surface.

Treated salt will form brine faster than standard rock salt. It also bounces less than standard rock salt, so more material stays on the roadway and less in the gutter. Snowplow crews can keep the road clearer easier because they are working with snow that has not bonded to the pavement.

Anti-icing has many advantages:

- City crews can respond to storms more proactively by beginning treatment in advance of the storm.
- Anti-icing enables a quicker return to improved road conditions resulting in fewer delays and crashes.
- Treated salt doesn't bounce off the roadway so material is more effectively used.
- If the storm is delayed, some residual salt remains on the road ready to begin work when the precipitation begins.
- Crews can efficiently cover more territory because a truckload of salt will last longer than a traditional truckload of sand-salt mix.

Reduction of Sand Use

Traditionally, snow storms have been fought by applying either a mixture of three parts sand to one salt or straight sand.

Salt melts snow and ice. Sand does not.

Sand increases friction, thereby providing better traction and control of vehicles. For sand to actually improve traction, it must remain between the tire and the ice. It does no good when it is buried in snow. Vehicle traffic will work sand into fresh snow and render it useless. Research on friction on pavement treated with sand shows that there is little benefit when traffic is present. Sand is most effective during very low temperatures (below 5 degrees F) where salt is ineffective or during freezing rain conditions. The City now uses little to no sand during the majority of its snow removal operations.

Benefits of Reducing Sand Use:

- Elimination of sand from entering our brooks and streams.
- Reduction in Spring clean up time for both the City and property owners.
- Reduction in air pollution from blowing sand particles.
- Buildings and homes are cleaner since less sand and mud is tracked in from streets and municipal parking lots.
- Reduction in windshield damage and chipped paint.

What changes will the public see?

- There will be some storms where the City snowplow drivers will be applying material to the roads before or just as a storm is starting.
- The streets and edges of the road will not be brown with sand after a snow storm has ended.

Driveway Clearing Tips

The following suggestions are intended to make your driveway snow removal easier and safer.

- If possible, wait until the road has been completely plowed to the curb/edge of pavement before shoveling the last 5 to 10 feet of your driveway. This way less snow from the road will end up in your driveway. It takes 3 to 5 hours after a typical snow storm has ended for the City to completely clear snow from the road to the curb/edge of pavement.
- It is best to place the snow on the far side of your driveway, away from the direction the plow is traveling. In most cases, this means placing the snow on the right side of your driveway as you face the road. This way the plow will carry the snow away from your driveway, rather than back into it. The City is not responsible for snow which is deposited in private driveways.
- Do NOT shovel, blow, or plow snow from your driveway or sidewalk into or across the road. Section 180-48 of the City Code prohibits the depositing of snow or ice into any city street in a manner that may impede or cause inconvenience to public travel. Remember, you are responsible for the actions of your contractor.
- Do NOT allow children to play on snow banks along the side of the road. The City may need to push back snow banks days after a storm to create room for the next snow event.

Winter Driving Checklist and Tips

- Keep good all season tires on your vehicle.
- Keep a shovel in your vehicle.
- Clean your vehicle of all snow and ice including the roof.
- Allow extra time to reach your destination. During storms, travel only when absolutely necessary.
- Keep a safe distance from plow trucks, minimum of 75 feet, and other vehicles.

Winter Sand

The City has ended the practice of providing sand for its residents.

Christmas Trees

The City provides residents with curbside pick-up of Christmas trees during the month of January. This collection is done randomly through the City and does not require an appointment.

Leaves and Trees

The City provides residents with curbside pick-up of leaves beginning around the second week of November and continues to collect leaves until mid December or upon the first snowfall. Leaves are not collected by the City during the spring. Residents can drop off leaves which are not collected in the fall due to weather conditions or during spring cleanup at the transfer station on Evansville Avenue at no cost. Hours of operation are:

- Monday – 7:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M.
- Wednesday – 10:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.
- First and Third Saturday – 7:30 A.M. to Noon

If there is a tree in front of your home that you believe should be removed due to possible disease, causing damage to the sidewalk or severely unbalanced due to trimming by the utility companies, contact Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings at 203-630-4259.

Portable Basketball Hoops

Residents are asked not to leave portable basketball hoops in the City's right-of-way. The portable basketball hoops are dangerous to both the snow plow driver and the residents should one be hit and it may become airborne. The City is not responsible for damage done by plows to basketball hoops left in the City right-of-way.

Street Sweeping

The Public Works Department generally begins the street sweeping program around the last week of March, weather permitting. Residents can assist in the following ways:

- Limit parking on the street until your street has been swept.
- Sweep and/or rake the sand on your sidewalks and lawns into the street.
- Keeps leaves, branches, rocks and other miscellaneous debris out of the street. This can cause damage to the sweeper and delay the program.
- Do NOT sweep sand or other debris into catch basins, storm inlets or watercourses.

Alternative Energy Solutions

As traditional energy costs continue to rise, citizens are looking for alternative solutions to heat their homes. Many are turning to space heaters, fireplaces and wood/coal burning stoves for warmth. Citizens should be aware that while these heat sources can be effective alternatives, they can pose serious home safety dangers.

The Fire Department stresses the importance of having working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Detectors save lives. Statistics validate this.

Before using alternative heating solutions you may contact the City Fire Marshal at 203-630-4010 for suggestions on the safe use and hazards associated with them.

Before the installation of any source of heat, a permit is required from the Building Department. A post installation inspection is required. You may contact them at 203-630-4091.

Potholes

Potholes are formed when water seeps into cracks in the pavement surface and the continual freeze-thaw cycle moves the surface of the pavement. Unfortunately, during periods where the weather fluctuates from freezing to warm temperatures the formation of potholes is unavoidable. Spring temperatures warm the cold pavement, melting and evaporating any frozen water. This action weakens the pavement. Traffic loosens the pavement even more, and it eventually crumbles and pops out. The pounding of tires wears a hole in the underlying gravel and a pothole is formed. A winter of heavy snow or rain and several freeze-thaw cycles can mean a big pothole season ahead.

During the weeks leading up to the winter season, City crews make pavement repairs to help minimize the formation of potholes. The patching of potholes continues throughout the winter. During cold weather, temporary repairs are made with cold patch since conditions do not permit the use of hot asphalt. During the warmer months, hot asphalt is used to repair the damaged road surface.

Maintenance crews are constantly on the lookout for potholes.

Permits

Prior to the construction of driveways, sidewalks, storm drains, water services, sanitary sewers, etc, a permit is required from the Engineering Division of Public Works. Application forms and directions are available on the City's website. The address is www.cityofmeriden.org. From the home page, click on municipal services>public works>file repository.

A permit is required for the placement of a dumpster within the City's right of way.

Recycling

By State Statute and City Code, recycling is required. The following items require recycling:

- Corrugated Cardboard - Cardboard boxes with a ruffled layer sandwiched between two sheets.
- Newspapers and Magazines - Including all paper inserts. Only clean newspapers and magazines.

- Glass & Juice Cartons - Clean food and beverage containers only. Clear or colored glass bottles and jars. Single serve containers, pint, quart, and half gallon juice and milk cartons.
- Mixed Paper - Office paper, stationary and envelopes including those with plastic windows. Direct mail pieces - shiny coated paper okay.
- Metal Cans and Foil - Metal food and beverage containers, aluminum foil baking pans.
- Plastic Bottles #1 and #2 - Plastic bottles #1 (PETE) and #2 (HDPE). Look for the number in the triangle on the bottom.
- Catalogs and phone books.

In addition to the above noted items, electronic waste is recycled. The following electronic devices should be recycled: Monitors, CPUs, Batteries (non vehicle), Ipods, PDAs, Cell Phones, Fax Machines, CRTs, Terminals, Stereo and Radio, Toner Cartridges, Printers, Keyboards, Copiers, Telephone PBX, Cables, VCRs, Modems, Mainframes, Typewriters, Laptops, and Inkjet Cartridges. These items may be deposited at the Transfer Station during normal working hours at no cost. The Transfer Station is located on Evansville Avenue adjacent to the Water Pollution Control Facility.

Street Lights

Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P) is the owner and maintainer of the street lights that illuminate our streets. If you find a street light that is not working, you may report this to CL&P using the internet. The address is www.cl-p.com >for my home>customer service>service request>streetlight program.