

TAMA COUNTY ORDINANCE #20 "SNOW ORDINANCE"

AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE POLICY AND LEVEL OF SERVICE WITH RESPECT TO THE CLEARANCE OF SNOW OR ICE AND THE MAINTENANCE OF TAMA COUNTY'S SECONDARY ROADS DURING THE WINTER MONTHS.

Be it enacted by the Board of Supervisors of Tama County, Iowa:

SECTION 1. Purpose. The purpose of this ordinance is to establish Tama County's policy and level of service with respect to the clearance of snow or ice and the maintenance of its secondary road system during the winter months, specifically defined as November through April, as provided in Section 668.10(2), Code of Iowa, (1995), and pursuant to the provisions of Section 309.67, Code of Iowa, 1983. Implementation of this ordinance will be accomplished by personnel of the Tama County Secondary Road Department.

SECTION 2. Level of Service. Clearance of snow or ice and maintenance of the secondary road system during the winter months is primarily for the benefit of the local residents of Tama County. Each storm has individual characteristics and must be dealt with accordingly. The portion of the roadway improved for travel will have upon it from time to time snow and/or ice in loose to compacted conditions. These conditions may be continuous, or they may be more concentrated on hills, in valleys, curves, protected areas and/or intersections. On occasion, County personnel may be rendered unavailable due to the requirements of the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991. Except for "emergencies", (as determined by the County Engineer's professional judgement, or his/her designee), which will be considered on a case by case basis, all clearance of snow or ice, sanding, salting, and other maintenance respecting winter conditions shall be accomplished within the amount of money available in the budget adopted by the Board of Supervisors, taking into consideration the year-round needs and other legal obligations of the Department. The County's existing snow removal equipment shall be utilized for this purpose. The entire width of the traveled portion of the road may not be cleared of all snow, ice, compacted snow and ice, or frost. Snow cleared from that part of the roadway improved for travel shall be placed on or in the adjacent shoulder, ditch, or right-of-way. Snow can be expected to accumulate adjacent to the traveled portion of the roadway to the extent that a motorist's sight distance to both the left and right may be greatly reduced or impaired. The snow removed from intersections may be piled

in the intersection corners in piles of unequal height. The line of sight, sight distance, or visibility of motorists approaching these intersection may be greatly reduced or impaired. The County shall not be responsible for snow pushed or otherwise placed on the roadway or shoulders by others. Motorists shall drive their vehicles during these conditions with additional caution and watchfulness, especially with respect to the surface of the roadway and to reduced or impaired visibility, and are advised to reduce their speed at least 25 miles per hour below that legally permitted or advised under normal conditions. With respect to roadways that have only one lane open, further caution and watchfulness should be exercised by the motorist, and their speed should not exceed 10 miles per hour. During these conditions, no additional warning or regulatory signs will be placed warning of impaired sight distances, visibility at intersections, road blockages, one-lane conditions, or that the road surface is slick or slippery, or what the advised speed should be.

SECTION 3. Sequence of Service. In the implementation of snow and ice removal and other maintenance of the County's secondary road system during the winter months, the County Engineer, or his/her designated representatives, shall assign operators and equipment to snow and ice control operations, select the actual sequence of roads to be cleared as provided for in this Section, and determine when drifting, wind velocity, and additional snow or snowstorms require that operations be temporarily suspended, or that additional clearance of paved routes be accomplished prior to the clearance of gravel and dirt roads. The County Engineer's professional judgment, or his/her designee's, shall prevail, unless it is clearly erroneous.

A. Paved Roads.

- (1) Paved roads will be a first priority for snow removal and ice control. (Exception: 160<sup>th</sup> St. west from US 63 to P Ave. and south to Buckingham Cemetery).
- (2) Snow removal will not normally commence until at least one (1) inch of snow has fallen.
- (3) Ice control (rock salt and/or calcium chloride) will not be applied unless sleet, freezing rain or other forms of ice are occurring, and temperatures are forecast to be below freezing for several hours.
- (4) Snow removal and ice control operations will normally be carried out between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 3:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. Operations outside these hours or on weekends or holidays may be authorized; but only on a 'storm

by storm' basis, and only if it is determined that such works is likely to be productive.

- (5) The initial snow removal effort will be to open all routes to two lane traffic as soon as possible and/or practicable. During initial snow removal operations, paved roads may only have one lane plowed for a period of time.
- (6) Clearing of shoulders and intersections will not begin until operators and equipment become available for these purposes after two lane travel has been achieved and will be done during normal working hours.
- (7) Units will not be operated when snow and/or blowing snow reduces visibility to hazardous levels or when snow drifts are forming faster than they can be removed.
- (8) It is not the policy of the County to provide a "dry" pavement condition.

B. Granular Surfaced (rock) Roads.

- (1) Major rock roads (generally those averaging over 100 vehicles per day) will share the first priority for snow removal with paved roads.
- (2) The remaining rock roads will be the second priority for snow removal.
- (3) Snow removal will not normally commence until at least three (3) inches of snow has fallen.
- (4) Ice control (sand or stone) will not normally be applied to rock roads. If in the judgement of the County Engineer, or his/her designee, an "emergency" exists and ice has built up on hills and intersections on the rock road system so as to become dangerous, abrasive ~~mat~~ material may be applied at these locations as crew and equipment availability allows and only as a last resort. This condition will not, under any circumstances, take a higher priority than placing of ice control material on the paved road system and will only be done after the paved roads are cleared of ice and snow. Abrasive material will only be placed after other mechanical means have been tried and failed, such as scraping with motorgraders.
- (5) Snow removal and ice control operations will normally be carried out between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 3:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. Operations outside of these hours or on weekends or holidays may be authorized; but only on a 'storm by storm' basis and only if it is determined that such work is likely to be productive.

- (6) The initial snow removal effort will be to provide at least one lane of access from one direction to all residences.
  - (7) Widening to two way travel and clearing of shoulders and intersections will not begin until operators and equipment become available for these purposes after one way travel has been achieved and will be done during normal working hours.
  - (8) Units will not be operated when snow and blowing snow reduces visibility to hazardous levels or when snow drifts are forming faster than they can be removed.
- C. Dirt Roads (including all Area Service System "B" and "C" Roads).
- (1) Snow will not normally be removed from these roads.
  - (2) If snow is removed, it will be a third priority, being done only after first and second priority operations have been completed.
- D. Private Drives.  
Snow removal operations may result in snow being deposited in entrances to private drives. The County shall not be responsible for removing such deposits nor for any snow removal operations with respect to private drives and entrances. Snow removed from private drives by county residents shall not be placed on the roadways or shoulders.
- E. Time Limitations - All Operations.  
There is no time limit, after a snowstorm, on any of the above described snow removal and ice control operations. They will be accomplished as rapidly as weather and budgetary constraints allow with no commitment, either expressed or implied, to have any single operation or combination of operations accomplished within a particular time period.

SECTION 4. Limitation of Service. The policy and level of service provided for in this Ordinance shall not include, and the following services shall not be performed:

- A. Sanding, salting, or placing of other abrasives upon roadways that are slick, slippery, and dangerous due to the formation of frost.
- B. Placing of additional signs or other traffic control devices related to impaired sight distances, restricted visibility at intersections, road blockages, one-lane conditions, slick or slippery road surfaces,

- or advised travel speed.
- C. Payment for snow removal from county roads by county Residents unless such services are covered by a Contract with the County.

SECTION 5. Emergency Conditions. The sequence of service stated in Section 3 may be superseded during "Emergency" conditions. An "Emergency" condition shall be considered as one where a loss of human life is probable, a serious injury or illness has occurred which requires a physician's immediate attention, or extensive loss of property is imminent. An "Emergency" request from a physician, fire department, ambulance service, police department or sheriff's office will be honored immediately, either during or after a snowstorm. "Emergency" requests from individuals should be verifiable as such and once confirmed will also be honored either during or after a snowstorm.

Such requests should be made to the County Engineer's Office, 515-484-3341, during the hours between 7 A.M. and 3:30 P.M., Monday through Friday (excluding holidays). Outside these hours, contact the Tama County Sheriff's Office (911 or 515-484-3760). County ambulance, fire and police departments have lists of individuals to contact outside normal working hours should they need "Emergency" assistance.

Requests from individuals for consideration of non-emergency but 'out of the ordinary' needs, such as funerals, weddings, and farm sales, should be made to the County Engineer's Office during the hours between 7 A.M. and 3:30 P.M., Monday through Friday (excluding holidays). The provisions of this Ordinance shall be suspended in the event the Governor, by proclamation, implements the State disaster plan, or the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, by proclamation, implements the County disaster plan. If either occurs, the County personnel and equipment shall be immediately subject to the direction of the Governor or the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors.

SECTION 6. Damage to Private Property. The County's obligation to remove snow and/or ice from the roadways of the secondary road system takes precedence over accidental damage to privately owned fences, gates and abandoned or stranded vehicles. Reasonable care will be used to avoid damage to private property; but due to the conditions of winter, the County assumes no liability in the event of damage unless it can be established that operator negligence was the primary reason for

the damage.

In general, privately owned vehicles that are stuck on the normally traveled portion of the roadway will not be moved. The owner will be notified when a way to the vehicle has been opened and that it is to be removed. If county equipment cannot get around a stuck vehicle, it may be moved far enough to allow the equipment to pass. Again, no liability for any damages is assumed unless negligence can be established. Stranded motorists will be offered a ride to the most readily available place of shelter.

SECTION 7. Repealer. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 8. Severability Clause. If any section, provision, or part of this ordinance shall be adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any section, provision or part thereof not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 9. When Effective. This ordinance shall be in effect after its final passage, approval, and publication as provided by law.

Passed and approved this 6<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1998.

Tama County Board of Supervisors

Jim Lebowitz  
Chairman

Larry J. West

R. N. Wil

ATTEST:

John A. Adams  
Tama County Auditor

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