

# **BECKER COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

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## **SNOW AND ICE CONTROL POLICY**

### **I. SNOWPLOWING POLICY**

The snowplowing operation has the function of plowing accumulated snowfall off the CSAH roads, CAR roads, and CSAH (M) roads to provide clear, safe right of ways and functional traffic flow. The plowing responsibilities are divided up between County forces and private contractors. Although routes vary in length, each County piece of equipment has about 50-65 centerline miles of roads to maintain. At the present, the County operates ten (10) route trucks – the balance of routes are assigned to private contractors, who maintain these roads within their contract areas. Contracted routes are primarily gravel roads.

The Department has only enough personnel to operate one shift daily.

### **II. SNOW REMOVAL POLICY**

It shall be Becker County's "Snow Removal Policy" to provide the following minimum levels of service:

1. Snow removal shall begin when accumulation reaches a point where it inhibits traffic flow or is starting to compact on bituminous roads. Plowing will continue on bituminous roads as visibility allows.
2. After the snow storm subsides, all primary bituminous roads shall be opened first, with secondary roads next.
3. If the storm progresses beyond 10 hours duration, or if the forecast is for continuous snowfall with several inches of accumulation, the Maintenance Superintendent may call for a split-shift for additional drivers, if available, to continue plowing on primary routes and to set starting times for the split-shift personnel.
4. All early morning snowplowing shall begin no later than 4:00 a.m., according to visibility.
5. The Department shall endeavor to have all County roads open to traffic within 24 hours after a snow storm subsides, depending on conditions.
6. The County Maintenance Superintendent shall be in contact with area School Superintendents on road conditions, plowing progress, and advise on school closings and/or delayed starting times.

7. The County will help all towns, within the County, with the loading of snow off County streets and CSAH Municipals as requested, only after all County roads have been plowed, widened, cleaned, and sanded.

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8. The County Engineer and/or Maintenance Superintendent shall be responsible for suspending plowing operations and calling plows and crews in, due to reduced visibility with regards to safety for employees and equipment, and to alter starting times during the week and weekends in the best interest of Becker County.
9. The Department shall be available to assist in any emergency on public or private roads as requested by the Sheriff's Department.
10. The Department shall not remove snow at locations off public road right of way or remove snow in special ways to assist places of business, unless it may become necessary due to threat of personal injury or loss of property.

III. DE-ICING & ICE CONTROL POLICY

Becker County's sanding operations shall provide the following levels of service:

1. The County does not have a bare pavement or gravel road policy.
2. Standard de-icing and sanding will be accomplished with a mixture of sand and 20-25% of sodium chloride only at temperatures above 15°F.
3. Cold weather sanding and de-icing, when the air temperature is at 15°F and falling, will be accomplished by the addition of 8-10 gallons of Liquid Calcium Chloride added to each cubic yard of salt sand mixture at the time of the application.
4. Areas to be considered for sanding will included controlled intersections, some curves and shall be performed as soon as practical, after plowing operations have been completed.
5. Sanding operations shall begin no later than 4:00 a.m., except during the following conditions:
  - a. Black Ice
  - b. Freezing Rain
6. Sanding on straight of ways shall be done only in extreme conditions, at a rate of approximately 800 lbs. per mile. Sanding on general snowpack will be spread lightly to give a nominal skid resistance as directed by the County Engineer or Maintenance Superintendent.
7. All sanding will be done only on bituminous roads within the County.

8. Isolated areas not generally sanded will be treated when manpower and equipment become available and then only under the direction of the County Engineer or Maintenance Superintendent.
9. Gravel roads will not be sanded due to the extreme damage done by the salt sand in the spring to the road surface.

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10. Snow removal from bridge decks will commence when the depth of the snow windrow accumulates to half the depth of the guardrail.

IV. MAILBOX REPLACEMENT POLICY

In the event of a mailbox and/or mailbox support being damaged the following policy will apply:

If after an on-sight inspection by the Maintenance Superintendent or Maintenance Technician, it is determined that the mailbox structure was damaged by the snow discharge from the snowplow and wing, it shall be the responsibility of the mailbox owner to repair the damage. If after the inspection, the damage is determined to be a result of a direct hit by the snowplow or wing, it will be the responsibility of the Department of Highways to replace the damaged structure. The Department of Highways will replace the structure with a Department metal mailbox support.

Department of Highways will also recommend the use of the Department of Highways mailbox supports in all repairs and replacement of mailbox supports. The mailbox supports are available for sale from the Department of Highways.

All mailbox installations shall conform to Minnesota Statutes § 169.072 and Minnesota Rules, Chapter 8818.0100 to 8818.0300.

V. GRAVEL ROAD SNOW & ICE CONTROL

1. Snowplowing on gravel roads shall commence after sufficient snow depth has accumulated as to impede the traffic flow and after snow compaction has occurred to minimize the gravel loss.
2. Plowing shall commence following several minimal snowfalls and after an accumulation outside the driving lane impedes traffic meeting and passing.
3. Gravel roads shall not be sanded due to the extreme damage done by the salt sand in the spring due to the accelerated thawing.

4. Motor graders or underbody plows will rough up icy areas on the gravel roads as directed by the County Engineer or the Maintenance Superintendent.

VI. STRUCTURE DAMAGE

When snow is discharged off the plow or wing and causes damage to any part of a structure or building it will be the responsibility of the property owner if the building does not meet the required zoning setbacks, or if the building is located within the Becker County highway right of way. In the case when a building or structure meets zoning setbacks, the resident/owner must notify the Becker County Highway Department in a timely manner after the incident occurs and the Department will send personnel to investigate the damage. If the damage is determined to have been caused by the snow plowing operation, the cost of repairs will be reimbursed to the owner. The Department representative will authorize the resident/owner to proceed with the repairs. The resident/owner can then choose to

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hire a contractor and have the work completed or make the repairs themselves. The contractor should bill the resident/owner for all labor and materials. The resident/owner should then submit the bill to the Becker County Highway Department. The reimbursement check will be issued to the resident/owner and not to the contractor. In the case where the resident/owner chooses to make the repairs themselves, they will be reimbursed for materials only. Again, the resident/owner should submit the material receipts to the Becker County Highway Department.

VII. UNATTENDED AND/OR OBSTRUCTION VEHICLE POLICY

The Becker County policy regarding unattended and/or obstruction vehicles shall be as directed by Resolution No. BCHD 89-2 of the Becker County Board of Commissioners adopted on January 19, 1989:

BE IT RESOLVED, the Ordinance No. VI (Relating to Traffic and Regulating Use of Public Roads and Highways in the County of Becker, State of Minnesota, and for the Establishment, Regulation and Control of Parking and Providing for Enforcement of this Ordinance and Punishment for its Violation and Related Matters), Section Seven (7), dated July 12, 1982 be amended as follows:

Section 7

When any police officer finds a vehicle unattended, upon any street or highway or away from the edge of such highway when same is designated as a no parking area or upon any bridge, causeway, or roadway where such vehicle constitutes any obstruction to traffic, snow removal procedures and/or any maintenance

operation, such officer is hereby authorized to provide for the removal of such vehicle and remove the same to the nearest convenient garage or impound lot at the owner's expense.

VIII. WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE GOAL

It shall be the goal of the Becker County Highway Department to keep people and products moving safely, with minimal cost, and with regards to safety of the plow operator and the traveling public.

- This policy supersedes all previously written documents, and unwritten policies, on the subject of snow removal and ice control.
- This policy is in effect and in operation during any snow and ice conditions unless the normal policy is superseded by a decision of the County Board, County Engineer and/or Maintenance Superintendent or as a change in policy by resolution.
- This policy will be in effect by resolution and adoption by the County Board.

Duly adopted by the Becker County Board of Commissioners this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 1990 by Resolution No. BCHD 90-60.

Revised 02/11/03 by Res. No. DOH 02-03-1F.