

VILLAGE OF RYE BROOK
SNOW & ICE REMOVAL
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FAQ's

The Village of Rye Brook maintains approximately 30 miles of public roads plus village-owned sidewalks and parking lots. In general, the Village's goal for the removal of snow and ice is to operate in the most efficient manner possible in order to clear and salt the streets for safe travel.

Directory

Village Hall: 938 King Street

Superintendent of Public Works: Michal Nowak e-mail: mnowak@ryebrook.org

Senior Office Assistant: Rose D'Ascoli e-mail: rdascoli@ryebrook.org

DPW phone number: 939-0753 fax: 939-0242

Dept. Hours: 8:30-4:30 Monday to Friday

For after hours call the Rye Brook Police Dept. - Non Emergency 937-1020 Emergencies 911

Web Site: www.ryebrook.org

FAQ's

Q - How soon does the Village prepare for a snow or ice storm?

A - Before most snow falls, equipment is prepared and emergency and major roadways are typically pretreated with salt. Salt prevents ice and frost from forming, makes snow removal easier and reduces the amount of salt needed to treat pavement after the snowfall.

Q - When do they plow the roads?

A – After salting, crews generally begin plowing the roads when there is 2 inches or more of snow on the primary roads.

Q - What happens if there are less than 2 inches of snow on the streets and the roads are slippery?

A – Plow blades cannot efficiently push low volumes of snow (usually 2" or less). Primary roads, bridges, connector roads and neighborhood streets are the main priorities and a salting operation will be conducted at these times.

Q - What is the procedure for snow removal from the streets?

A - Main and connector roads are plowed first with special attention to higher elevations, steep hills, difficult intersections, and school areas. Snow is plowed from the center of the street towards the curbs and driveways. Snowplows are designed to discharge the snow to the right side of the truck. This allows the snowplow to travel with the flow of traffic.

Q - How many trucks are used for snow & ice removal?

A - Presently we have up to 12-14 trucks available for snow removal. For salting operations, we utilize up to 9 pieces of equipment. During most heavy yield storms, between 10-14 Public Works and Parks staff will use various equipment around the clock.

Q - Why isn't my road plowed sooner?

A - Primary roads are plowed first, followed by secondary roads that connect the local roads to the primary roads, then non-connector secondary roads. This is done in this order to maximize access for emergency vehicles. Obstacles can also block the roads such as downed trees and power lines, or vehicles that may be blocking the narrower roads take time to be removed so the plows can gain access to the roads. In some cases this can prevent an entire street from being cleared. The amount of snowfall will have different effects on the snow removal process.

Q - Will the snowplow ever completely clear my residential street down to bare pavement?

A - The primary goal is to make residential streets passable - not to clear them to bare pavement.

Q - My Cul-de-sac doesn't look like it was plowed enough. Why?

A - Cul-de-sacs are plowed differently due to the difficulty for most plows to turn around in the small area. Snow is typically pushed to available areas in the cul-de-sacs and may not appear as evenly distributed as on other streets. If you can, avoid parking your vehicle on any Village maintained road, including cul-de-sacs, as this will interfere with snowplowing operations.

Q - How long will it take to finish plowing all the streets?

A - Crews work continuously around the clock until all Village-maintained streets are passable. The type of snow (wet or powdery), pavement temperature, ambient air temperature and wind conditions affect how quickly snow can be removed. Here are some general guidelines:

- It takes about 8 to 10 hours following the end of a three-inch snowfall to plow and/or treat every Village road once
- Within 24 to 36 hours after a 10-inch snowfall, expect major and primary Village roads to be cleared and one additional snow plow pass made through neighborhood streets.
- After a 15-inch snowfall, crews should complete snow plowing in about 24 to 30 hours.

Q - How do you know that my road has been plowed?

A - Our snow removal equipment operators have maps of the assigned snow removal routes. At the end of their shift they go over their logs with their shift supervisor.

Q - Can I flag down a snowplow operator if I have a snow removal request or I like to make a comment?

A - Please do not stop the snowplow operators to ask questions or comment on the service. Snowplow drivers are assigned specific areas and cannot plow "in a different way" or plow other areas unless directed by their supervisor. If you have questions or need information about snowplowing after the event, you should call the Public Works Dept. at 939-0753 or Administration Dept. at 939-1121 during normal work hours of Monday through Friday 8:30a.m. to 4:30p.m., or direct calls during off hours to the local police at their non-emergency number 937-1020.

Q - Why did the plow leave a berm of snow across my driveway and in the front of my walkway?

A - Plowing often leaves a berm of snow across driveway entrances. Berm removal is the responsibility of the residents. The snow plow truck must clear the roadway. The snow plow by design moves the snow from the roadway to the right side of the roadway leaving the snow in front of the driveways and along the properties. In a heavy snow (3 or more inches) our snow plow trucks will make at least two passes, we recommend if possible you wait to clear your driveway until after those passes have been made. If you cannot wait to clear your driveway, we recommend that you place the

snow from your driveway apron on the right side as you approach the street, this will decrease the volume of snow placed back into your driveway apron by the snow plow truck.

Q - Why are the berms so big and heavy?

A - The size and weight of a berm is determined by the amount of snowfall, the accumulation on the roads, the air temperature and the amount of moisture on the road and in the air.

Q - Why can't the snowplow driver pick up the blade or change the angle of the blade when passing my driveway?

A - Since our main goal is to open the primary roads as soon as possible, lifting of blades at each driveway would slow down the snow removal operation significantly and leave snow in the road that may in turn be a hazard. With approximately 3,300 residential properties in the village, it is not possible to avoid plowing snow in front of driveways and walkways. Any efforts to try to "turn" or "lift" a plow blade at every driveway would extend the time frame to cover the snow routes which could result in unsafe travel and an inefficient operation at a higher cost.

Q - When is a good time to remove snow from my driveway?

A - Unless you have to get out of your driveway immediately, save yourself some frustration with shoveling the end of a driveway only to have a plow push snow back again. Rye Brook snow removal crews make at least two passes on each side of the road, so you may want to wait until the second pass before opening your driveway. If conditions are extremely cold, it may be necessary to shovel after both passes to prevent the berm from freezing over. Please note that putting snow from driveways into the streets is illegal and creates a hazard for drivers and a liability for the responsible party. All shoveled snow should be kept on the property. Residents should place snow on the right side of the driveway as you face the street in the flow of traffic.

Q - Do I have to shovel the sidewalk in front of my property?

A - Sidewalk clearing is the responsibility of the property owner. Rye Brook code mandates that property owners must remove snow and ice from sidewalks in front of their properties so as to provide a continuous passageway, within 24 hours after the snow ceases to fall. This may include the use of salt or any other abrasive when ice has formed on the sidewalk.

Q - The fire hydrant in front of my house is covered with snow. Who is responsible for the snow removal around it?

A - State code mandates that if a fire hydrant is on a property, the property owner must keep it assessable. Shovel the snow away so firefighters can easily locate them in the event of an emergency.

Q - Is it okay to park my car on the road during a snow storm?

A - Your vehicle, including other non-vehicle items, must be off the streets during snow removal. Obstructions in the street hamper operations and prevent complete clearing of the street. In some cases this can prevent an entire street from being cleared. The snowplows can only make one pass in each direction when vehicles are parked on streets. Two passes on wider streets can be made in each direction if owners will move their vehicles when snowplows are in the area. Taking the time to move your vehicle when plows are present will give you a place to park and save you from having to dig out. If plows are forced to go around a vehicle parked on a street, this creates a hazard by narrowing the street width. If the vehicle is moved after plowing, it leaves a snow berm in the street that another vehicle can hit. It can leave a street so narrow, that emergency vehicles are unable to travel them.

Q - What should I do if an emergency occurs and I don't think the rescue or emergency vehicles can get through on the roads?

A – If it is an emergency, call 911. If it is not an emergency, during non-business hours please contact the Rye Brook police department at their non-emergency number, 937-1020. During normal business hours please contact the Public Works Department at 939-0753.

Q - What should I do if I am a senior or disabled and unable to shovel out my driveway?

A - There are local contractors that you can contact who will clear your snow for a fee. You may also try to contact the local schools to see if they have any students that may need community service or looking for employment, or ask a neighbor to help if they can provide assistance. The Village DPW Staff does not perform this service.

Q - Whom do I contact in an emergency?

A - Call 911 only for emergencies or for emergency police, fire or EMS assistance.

Q - Will the Village pick up my garbage as usual if there is bad weather?

A - Cancellation of sanitation services due to the weather rarely occurs. Most likely, your "usual pickup time" can be effected due to road conditions and current weather. Village Code mandates that all residential trash must be placed out prior to 6 a.m. the day of and after 6 p.m. the night before the scheduled day. Try to be conscience about your garbage cans and recycle bins during snow storms. If you put them too close to the roadway, the snowplows may have to go around them and leave your area unplowed or the cans may be damaged by plows. Garbage cans placed in the roadway and damaged by plows are not the responsibility of the Village. Do not put them too far back, as the garbage collector may not have good access to pick them up. There will be no collection from residences where snow and ice have not been cleared from access pathways or driveways. Can the workers get to your trash? Is your trash covered by snow and not visible? These are questions you should consider in making the garbage accessible for the sanitation contractor's employees. We urge that residents be patient with collection during inclement weather and collection times may be longer than usual.

Q - Will the Village notify us if there is a change in the sanitation schedule?

A - We do not notify residents if there is a change to the time your trash will be picked up. If the pickup is slow due to weather, the collection may extend to the following day to complete the route. The Village will notify residents only via e-mail of a cancellation or change of date for sanitation services or by notice on our web site, www.ryebrook.org. To receive these e-mails, sign up by going to www.ryebrook.org homepage and provide your e-mail address to receive Village-related news.

Q - A Village snow-plow damaged my car or property. What do I do?

A - If your property is damaged during snow removal or salt spreading operations, it will be in your best interest to obtain as much of the following information as possible:

- Note the date of the occurrence, time, address, witnesses, and any other information that you can.
- Get a description of the village vehicle such as type of truck, color, truck number or plate number,
- Take pictures of the damage.
- File a Police report.

After obtaining this information, you should call the Village Administration office and explain the damage to them. If the damage was caused by Village equipment, you must submit your claim in writing to be considered by the village's insurance carrier. Be sure and include copies of written estimates of damage and photographs, if possible.

Q - Is the Village responsible for damage done on my property?

A – The Village will replace damaged asphalt curbs that have been struck by the plows during plow operations during their scheduled summer work. If a plow damages a Belgium block curb or Belgium block aprons abutting the street, repairs to such are the responsibility of the homeowner. If a sprinkler head in the right of way is damaged during plowing, this is also the responsibility of the homeowner since the sprinkler system should not be located in the public right-of-way.

Other situations such as natural acts or storms that exceed reasonable capacities of the village infrastructure are also examples of situations where the Village may not be responsible.

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS. Think about how to improve your property before the snow falls. Sprinkler heads, low walls and expensive shrubs are virtually invisible as the snow gets deeper. Snow removal crews cannot always see what is near the roadway. Do you have additional space for visitor parking? If not, try to provide a space in your driveway for your winter guests so they will not be subject to citations, towing and possible vehicle damage.