

CITY OF RAPID CITY SNOW REMOVAL OPERATIONS


The winter season often presents hazardous driving conditions and circumstances which are inconvenient and frustrating for everyone; homeowners, motorists, pedestrians, emergency services and snow fighters alike.



As the motoring public begins preparation for the coming winter season, the Street Division has been doing so since the last season ended. With the end of the previous snow season, policies, plans, equipment and materials are reviewed, refined, repaired and replaced in an effort to improve service for the season ahead.

Snowy, winter conditions bring their own set of circumstances and problems, causing frustration, inconvenience and hazardous driving conditions for all.

It is the goal of the Rapid City Street Division to provide the motoring public with the safest driving surfaces possible, with the resources we have available.



*There's no business
like Snow Business*

PW103007-21d
Rapid City contains approximately 430 miles of streets and 40 miles of alleys. Naturally when a snow begins, it is impossible to cover the entire street system at once, so a priority system has been established for different levels of service.

Certain emergency routes and some streets in the downtown area are posted as snow removal routes. Vehicles parked in such posted areas during a “Snow Alert” will be towed and fined as per City Ordinance 10.48.050. Snow Alerts will be declared by the Director of Public Works or his designee anytime conditions for snow removal are met. Snow Alerts are announced by local media.

Chemical Treatment (in the form of sodium chloride) is used when there is light snow, freezing rain or drizzle, or anytime icy conditions occur on city streets. In the interest of air quality, a liquid deicer (magnesium chloride water) is added to lower the thawing temperature and reduce the amount of the chemical needed. To further reduce the amount of chemical used, flat level sections of roadways are treated only when extreme conditions exist.

Snow Route Priority

Priority I

Arterial streets, emergency routes , major intersections and certain streets having steep grades or other hazardous geometry. Does include downtown snow removal

Priority II

Collector and sub-collector streets and school routes

Priority III

Residential streets

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No two winter storms are exactly the same. We cannot establish a specific time of day that a plowing operation will start. Many pieces of information are taken into consideration prior to commencing plowing operations. Items considered are: time of day, time of year, temperature, weather forecast, rate of snow fall and ground temperature. Plowing is a 24 hour a day operation and snow incidents are categorized into three different levels of response.

Level A

Snow depth 2" to 4": Priority I Streets are cleared by Street Division personnel. Level A also includes snow removal in the downtown core area. Snow must be loaded and hauled from the area. This is done at night to avoid high traffic.

Level B

Snow depth 4" to 6": Snow plowing operations are extended to Priority II streets. Contractors may be hired to assist.

Level C

Snow depth 6" or more: Plowing is extended to all streets in Rapid City. Contractors are hired to supplement Street Division equipment and personnel.

General Plowing Policies:

Driveway entrances will not be opened by City crews under routine plowing operations. Exceptions can be made to this policy in special situations as may be determined by the Director of Public Works or his designee.

Clearing of the snow from sidewalks, located at either curb side or property line, shall be the responsibility of the property owner as per ordinance 12.20.070 of the Rapid City Municipal Code. The City will remove snow from sidewalks on public bridges and from curb side sidewalks along four-lane streets that are located on school pedestrian routes in residential neighborhoods, but only after all plowing operations are completed.

It shall be the practice of the City to plow the street from curb to curb in order to maintain surface drainage and the structural integrity of the street. Should mail delivery be halted at a residence because a windrow of snow is blocking the mail box, the City will remove enough snow for mail service to resume if plowing was improperly done .

Frequently Asked Questions

PW103007-21d

Will the City remove snow from driveways?

It is City policy to clean the snow from curb to curb in order to open the gutters and maintain drainage. This may take a number of passes by the snow plows. It is best not to clean your drive until you are sure the plows are done. Try to pile snow on the right side of the drive as you face the street. This will minimize the amount of snow pushed back into your driveway if snowfall continues and additional plowing is required.

Why doesn't the plow open my driveway?

There are over 15,000 driveways in the city. Assuming a minimum of two (2) minutes per driveway, it would take 500 hours and cost about \$30,000 each time it snows.

Why don't you plow the snow to the middle of the street?

Snow plowed to the middle of the street reduces the width of the driving lanes and restricts visibility. When thawing and freezing occurs, water runs across the driving lanes and freezes, creating additional hazards.

What can I do if my mailbox is blocked?

If snow plows inadvertently block access to your mail box, contact the Street Division immediately and we will correct the situation as soon as possible.

Who is responsible for snow removal from curb side sidewalks?

Plow operators must clear curb to curb. Every effort is made to keep the amount of snow left on curb sidewalks to a minimum. Curb sidewalks along four-lane streets that are located on school pedestrian routes in residential neighborhoods will be cleared by City crews, but only after all plowing operations are completed.

Why aren't the downtown streets cleared first?

Snow removal in the downtown business area cannot be done until a Snow Alert has been declared and all vehicles are removed. Snow removal costs the City about \$650 per hour, or \$15,000 to \$18,000 per snow incident. While some plowing is done to keep traffic lanes open, snow removal is not usually initiated until the storm has ended.

What do I do if my property is damaged by a snowplow?

When everything is covered with snow it is almost impossible for plow operators to determine the exact location of curbs and other obstructions. If you experience damage to sod, curbs, driveways, sprinkler systems, etc., please call the Street Department. Repairs will be scheduled as weather permits.

Why are you driving around with your plows in the air rather than plowing as you go?

A piece of snow removal equipment today is a multi-functional tool. Most trucks are equipped to apply material to the roadway, plow, or a combination of the two. The City is divided into various areas with a truck assigned to each area. Each area has a starting & ending point with needed material stored at a central location in the City.

Depending on weather conditions, trucks may be assigned material application duties, plowing duties, or both. The truck's total capabilities are not necessarily needed all the time, thus the plow may be up. In addition, trucks assigned to material application duties may be seen traveling between their area of responsibility and the stockpiled material.

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'SCOOP IT' PROGRAM

City of Rapid City and the State Department of Corrections Free Snow Removal for the Elderly and Disabled!

The South Dakota Department of Corrections, in conjunction with the Rapid City Office of the United Way and the City of Rapid City, is offering free snow removal for Rapid City residents who are elderly or disabled with limited income. The '**Scoop It**' program utilizes supervised minimum-security inmates to remove snow from the sidewalks and driveways of elderly or disabled homeowners.

Any elderly or disabled resident of the City of Rapid City who is interested in the '**Scoop It**' service may call the Rapid City Office of the United Way at 343-5872 when there is measurable snow fall in the City of Rapid City.

FOR YOUR COMFORT, SAFETY & CONVENIENCE

Brush up on your winter driving skills.

Keep you vehicles in top condition.

Allow more time for travel during winter.

Don't throw snow into the street when clearing your driveway.

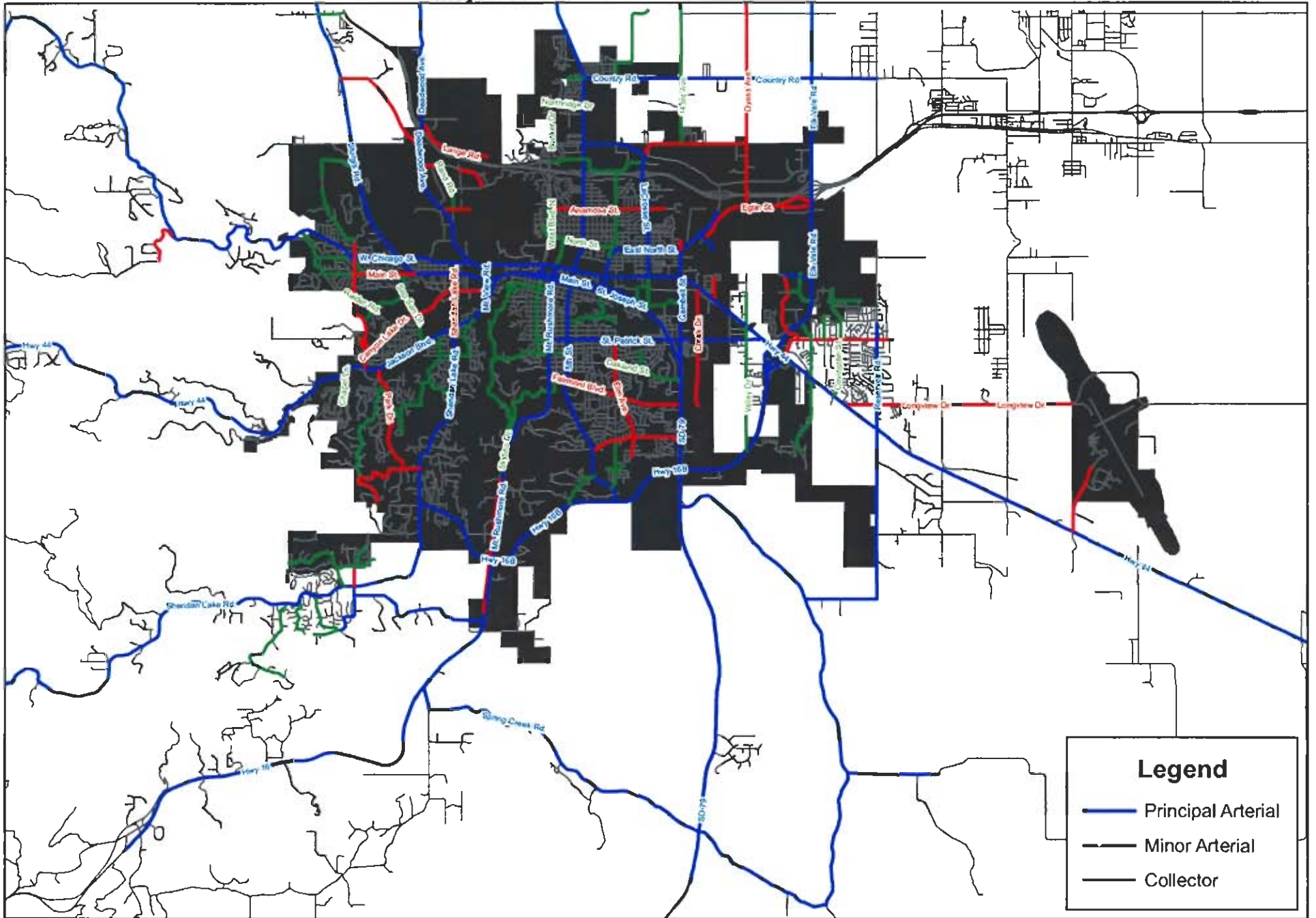
When winter storms are approaching, park vehicles off the street until plowing operations are completed.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

Questions and comments are always welcome and will assist us in planning and preparing for future snow seasons.

Rapid City Street Division - 300 Sixth Street, Rapid City, SD - 605-394-4152

Major Street Plan- Road Classifications



Legend

- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector

0 10,000 20,000 40,000 Feet