



RURAL SNOW AND ICE CONTROL PROGRAM COUNCIL POLICY

OPE-250
Effective Date:
October 13, 2026

POLICY STATEMENT

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (the “Municipality”) aims to provide for the safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians within the established rural hamlet boundaries (the “Rural Service Area”). The Rural Snow and Ice Control Program ensures that Snow and Ice Control is carried out in a timely manner in accordance with priorities identified by Council.

The Rural Snow and Ice Control Program Council Policy (the “Policy”):

- sets Snow and Ice Control service standards for the Rural Service Area;
- supports reduction of hazards and mitigation of economic loss; and
- prioritizes safe access to residents and road users.

DISCLAIMER

The service levels and response times set out in the Policy below are intended to provide operational guidance under normal conditions and are not guarantees of service. The Municipality will make reasonable efforts to meet the service levels outlined in this Policy. However, service delivery may be affected by factors, including, but not limited to, extreme weather conditions, snowfall intensity or duration, emergency situations, equipment failures, traffic conditions, and illegally parked vehicles. Where circumstances require, the Municipality may adjust priorities, response times, schedules, and service levels to address public safety needs and maintain overall operational effectiveness.

DEFINITIONS

“Council” means the collective group of elected officials who govern the Municipality.

“Extreme Freeze Thaw” means a temperature fluctuation that results in ruts exceeding ten (10) centimetres in depth on a snow-packed Road.

“Extreme Weather Response” means the municipal response to Significant Snowfall, Extreme Freeze Thaw, or Severe Weather.

“Priority One Roads” means residential Roads and other Roads that are used for school routes.

"Priority Roads" means Priority One Roads, Priority Two Roads, and Priority Three Roads.

"Priority Two Roads" means Roads that have high usage and Industry Roads.

"Priority Three Roads" means Roads with lower usage and recreational Roads.

"Road" means that part of a highway intended for use by vehicular traffic, including gravel roads.

"Rural Snow and Ice Control Program" means the municipal program providing Snow Plowing, Sanding and Salting, and Snow Removal Services for the Rural Service Area.

"Sanding and Salting" means the controlled application of abrasive materials, de-icing agents, or chemicals, including, but not limited to, mixtures of sand, granular sand, liquids, road salt, calcium chloride, and other approved products or blends.

"School Run" means a specialized school bus route for transporting students between their home and their place of education.

"Severe Weather" means a weather event during which more than thirty (30) centimetres of snow falls within a twenty-four (24) hour period and may include blowing snow and reduced visibility.

"Sidewalk" means a hard-surfaced walkway, typically constructed of concrete, located within a public right-of-way, municipal easement, park, or other municipal property, intended primarily for pedestrian travel.

"Significant Snowfall" means a weather event during which between twenty (20) and thirty (30) centimetres of snow falls within a twenty-four (24) hour period.

"Snow and Ice Control" means the control of the accumulation of packed snow or ice on Roads through the use of equipment, abrasive materials, or chemicals that comply with applicable legislation and regulations.

"Snow Plowing" means the pushing of accumulated snow from a Road to the sides of the Road to maintain no less than one lane passage in each direction.

"Snow Removal" means the removal of the plowed snow by loading it into vehicles for transport and hauling to a designated snow disposal site.

"Snowfall" means a weather event during which less than twenty (20) centimetres of snow falls within a forty-eight (48) hour period.

"Stockpile" means snow that has been deposited into a pile during Snow and Ice Control activities.

“Trail” means a designated pathway located within municipal parks, open spaces, or transportation corridors, that is and intended to accommodate multiple users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and users of other approved non-motorized modes of travel.

“Windrow” means a row of snow that is left by the blades of a snowplow during Snow Plowing.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Continuous Improvement – The Municipality is committed to regularly monitoring and reviewing the Rural Snow and Ice Control Program, and to using such findings to support continuous improvement.
2. Public Awareness – The Municipality is committed to increasing public awareness of the Rural Snow and Ice Control Program, and to using a variety of communication channels to relay accurate and up-to-date information.

SERVICE STANDARDS

3. The Municipality will endeavour to maintain Priority Roads to a compacted snow surface condition wherein snow on Road surfaces is compacted by traffic or leveled by snowplows.
4. Higher-priority Roads shall receive service before lower-priority Roads.
5. Pullouts and left turn lanes will have the same priority as travelled lanes.
6. Service levels may be impacted by resource availability, Council-approved budget, equipment failures, illegally parked vehicles, an Extreme Weather Response, or other operational constraints.
7. The Chief Administrative Officer may, at their discretion, modify operational priorities and service levels, as necessary.

PRIORITY SCHEDULE

8. Snow Plowing and Sanding and Salting of Roads shall be carried out in the following order of priority to best serve the public, facilitate the movement of emergency vehicles, and align with Council-approved budget allocations, as follows:
 - a. Priority One Roads, which include residential Roads and School Runs;
 - b. Priority Two Roads, which include high-usage industrial Roads; and
 - c. Priority Three Roads, which include recreational Roads and Roads with limited traffic.

9. Pursuant to sections 6 and 7, the established priority order may be modified, as required.
10. The Municipality will make reasonable efforts to avoid Snow and Ice Control in school zones between 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM and between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM on school days.
11. The Municipality will endeavor to facilitate Snow Plowing and Sanding and Salting on School Runs before school bus routes begin.

SNOW PLOWING

SNOW PLOWING DURING SNOWFALL

12. During a Snowfall, Snow Plowing will be carried out as follows:
 - a. Priority One Roads - When more than five (5) centimetres of snow has fallen, Snow Plowing will be completed within twenty-four (24) hours.
 - b. Priority Two Roads - When more than seven (7) centimetres of snow has fallen, Snow Plowing will be completed within forty-eight (48) hours.
 - c. Priority Three Roads - When more than nine (9) centimetres of snow has fallen, Snow Plowing will be completed within seventy-two (72) hours.
13. Notwithstanding section 12(a), the Municipality will endeavor to facilitate Snow Plowing, and Sanding and Salting on School Runs before school bus routes begin.

EXTREME WEATHER RESPONSE

14. During a Significant Snowfall, Extreme Freeze Thaw, or Severe Weather, the Chief Administrative Officer, or designate, has discretion to initiate an Extreme Weather Response.
15. During an Extreme Weather Response, Snow Plowing resources will be deployed.
 - a. Priority One Roads shall be plowed on a continuous basis, as equipment and personnel resources permit.
 - b. Upon completion of Snow Plowing on Priority One Roads, Snow Plowing operations shall commence on Priority Two Roads.
 - c. Upon completion of Snow Plowing on Priority Two Roads, Snow Plowing operations shall commence on Priority Three Roads.
16. Upon completion of Snow Plowing, the Municipality will assess the need for Snow Removal on residential Roads where sightlines are obstructed.

SNOW REMOVAL

17. The Municipality will assess the need for Snow Removal where sightlines are obstructed, as conditions permit.
18. Snow Removal will only be carried out for residential Roads when sightlines are obstructed.

SANDING AND SALTING

19. When conditions warrant, Sanding and Salting will be carried out in accordance with the priority order established in section 8 and within the following timeframes.
 - a. Priority One Roads - Sanding and Salting will be completed within twenty-four (24) hours.
 - b. Priority Two Roads - Sanding and Salting will be completed within forty-eight (48) hours.
 - c. Priority Three Roads - Sanding and Salting will be completed within seventy-two (72) hours.
20. Conditions that may affect priority include, but are not limited to:
 - a. temperatures and ambient conditions conducive to the formation of ice on Roads;
 - b. freezing rain events; or
 - c. other hazardous situations.
21. Sanding and Salting may be undertaken in conjunction with Snow Plowing or may be performed independently.
22. The Municipality's Salt Management Plan establishes salt management practices intended to support the provision of safe, efficient, and cost-effective Roads while minimizing adverse environmental impacts.

SIDEWALKS

SIDEWALKS ADJACENT TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

23. A person shall remove snow and ice from any Sidewalk adjacent to a property that they own or occupy within forty-eight (48) hours after the snow or ice was formed or deposited thereon, in accordance with the Community Standards Bylaw No. 21/010.
24. A person shall not deposit snow or ice or other obstruction upon any Sidewalk, highway, public place or private property that is not their own, in accordance with the Community Standards Bylaw No. 21/010.

MUNICIPAL SIDEWALKS AND TRAILS

25. Snow Plowing of municipal Sidewalks and Trails shall be prioritized as follows:
- a. Priority one - municipal Sidewalks and Trails within Rural Communities serving emergency facilities, recreation or municipal facilities and schools, will be plowed within forty-eight (48) hours following a Snowfall, Significant Snowfall, or Severe Weather;
 - b. Priority two - all other municipal Sidewalks and Trails located within the Rural Communities will be plowed within four (4) days following a Snowfall, Significant Snowfall, or Severe Weather; and
 - c. Priority three - all other municipal Sidewalks and Trails on Priority Two Roads will be plowed within seven (7) days following a Snowfall, Significant Snowfall, or Severe Weather.
26. When temperature and ambient conditions are conducive to the formation of ice on Sidewalks and Trails, Sanding and Salting shall be undertaken to promote traction in accordance with the priorities outlined in section 8.

WINDROWS AND STOCKPILES

27. Windrows and other Stockpiles of snow may be created as a result of Snow and Ice Control activities.
28. Persons are encouraged to exercise caution and refrain from climbing on Stockpiles.
29. When Windrows measuring fifteen (15) centimetres or greater are created as a result of Snow and Ice Control activities, the Municipality will endeavour to remove such Windrows from driveway entrances within twenty-four (24) hours.
30. The Municipality will not remove Windrows that result from causes other than Snow and Ice Control.

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL RESOURCING

31. Where operational requirements warrant additional resources, the Municipality may:
- a. deploy municipal staff;
 - b. retain additional contracted equipment and services, where available.; or
 - c. deploy municipal staff and retain additional contracted equipment and services.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

32. The Municipality is committed to providing clear, coordinated, and timely communication throughout the winter maintenance season.

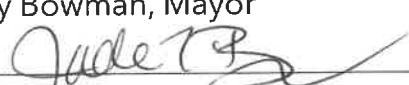
33. The Municipality shall make the following information available to the public:
- list of Priority Roads;
 - maps of Priority Roads; and
 - other relevant information.
34. Public education and advance notice may be provided through a variety of communication channels, including the municipal website, social media, direct mail, radio, digital advertising, billboards, and community outreach initiatives.
35. Where possible, the Municipality will provide advance notice to the public when an Extreme Weather Response is declared.

APPROVAL

This Council Policy is approved by:



Sandy Bowman, Mayor



Jade Brown, Chief Legislative Officer

October 13th 2026

Date

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

- Community Standards Bylaw No. 21/010
- Roads and Transportation Bylaw No. 25/020

DETAILS AND REVISION HISTORY

Date	Action	Description
October 13, 2026	Introduction	New Rural Snow and Ice Control Council Policy OPE-250