



FOR RELEASE:

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City of Racine Declares Snow Emergency in Advance of Wednesday Weather Event

DPW Prepares for Impending Snowstorm with Tiered Snow Removal Plan

RACINE— With a significant snowstorm expected midweek, the Commissioner of Public Works has declared a snow emergency beginning noon on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, through noon on Thursday, February 13, 2025.

The City of Racine's Department of Public Works (DPW) is mobilizing to ensure roads are cleared as efficiently and safely as possible.

Phased Operations Plan in Place

DPW crews have already begun applying brine to roadways. When used ahead of a snowstorm, brine forms a thin protective layer on pavement, preventing ice from bonding and making plowing more efficient. Unlike dry salt, which can scatter upon application, brine adheres to the surface for longer-lasting effectiveness. This proactive step enhances snow removal efforts and reduces the need for excessive road salt.

Once snowfall begins, plows will be deployed immediately to keep streets passable.

While snowstorms vary in intensity, timing, and duration, the city aims to clear main roads within 24 hours after snowfall stops and ensure local streets are passable within 48 hours.

Plowing Strategy

For decades, the City has followed a structured, tiered approach to snow removal, prioritizing public safety and efficient use of resources.

1. **Arterial Roads (88 miles):** These major routes are cleared first to ensure access for emergency vehicles, transit, and commuters. Arterial roads are maintained as bare pavement routes, meaning they are plowed down to the road surface.
2. **Local Streets (172 miles):** Once arterial roads are clear, plows move to neighborhood streets. These roads are plowed to a passable condition rather than bare pavement. This means there may still be snow or ice present, and drivers must exercise caution in areas with less traffic and on side streets.

3. **City-Owned Facilities & Parking Lots:** Crews then clear the lots of 70 city-owned buildings and dozens of city parking areas.
4. **Public Sidewalks (30 miles):** Finally, crews work to clear designated sidewalks.

Snow removal operations will continue around the clock. The staffing levels for this event have been increased since January. To maintain safety, plow operators are limited to no more than 16 consecutive hours of driving before a mandatory break is required.

While residents may wish for their streets to be cleared immediately, the structured approach is necessary to maintain safety and accessibility throughout Racine.

How Residents Can Help

Residents can assist snow removal efforts by following the city's **alternate-side winter parking ordinance**, in effect from December 1 to April 1 (excluding Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1). Compliance with this ordinance significantly improves plowing efficiency and road accessibility.

- The **Racine Police Department (RPD)** will actively enforce winter parking regulations, with increased attention during snow events.
- Since a **snow emergency** has been declared, parking is prohibited on arterial and collector streets. Vehicles parked on these roads during the snow emergency may be towed.

We advise residents to anticipate longer travel times, and to check weather conditions before heading out. We also remind motorists to reduce speeds, especially in areas where visibility is low, or where compacted snow or ice may remain on the road surface and keep a safe distance from other vehicles, especially snowplows.

To ensure safe passage for pedestrians, residents are asked to clear sidewalks within 24 hours after the snowfall stops.

Garbage Collection and DPW Waste Drop Off Sites

During heavy snowfall, DPW staff may be reassigned to assist with snow removal, which could result in temporary delays in garbage collection. Residents should place their bins at the curb by 7 a.m. on their scheduled collection day. Crews will pick up the trash, although it may occur later than usual.

The Racine Transfer Station, 6300 S. 21st Street, will be closing at 3:00 p.m. Wednesday for residential drop-off. Additionally, the Pearl Street Facility will be closed all day on Wednesday for yard waste drop-off.

The Commissioner of Public Works will assess conditions and announce any service adjustments as needed.

City's Commitment to Residents

Snow removal is a complex operation requiring time, coordination, and resources. While storms present challenges, the City of Racine remains committed to clearing roads as efficiently as possible. Officials ask for patience and cooperation as crews work to maintain safe and accessible streets throughout the community.