There’s a lot to love about winter… driving in the snow doesn’t make the list. It’s stressful, time consuming and, most of all, dangerous.

We’ve all had the white-knuckle commutes – whether it’s just a two-mile drive to the store or a 20-mile trek to work or school – and wonder why the plow trucks are taking so long to clear the roads. Rest assured it’s not for lack of effort here in Novi as we have 16 trucks and more than 20 crew members dedicated to clearing roads in a timely manner.

Safety is the top priority during any snow event and of the utmost importance are major roads, emergency routes and school bus routes, followed by police and fire facilities and bridges and residential streets with significant hills and/or curves. Once those areas are completed, crews then move onto residential streets, public parking lots and sidewalks abutting city-owned property. (Truth be told, City Council members don’t get their streets cleared first). Novi’s Snow Team is responsible for clearing more than 500 lane miles of public roads, including most neighborhood and major streets we travel every day. The Road Commission for Oakland County handles Haggerty, Eight Mile, Napier, Fourteen Mile and Pontiac Trail, while the Michigan Department of Transportation takes care of I-96, I-696, I-275 and M-5.

“The goal for our team is to have all major and neighborhood roads cleared within 24 hours after the end of the storm,” said Matt Wiktowski, field operations senior manager. “In order for us to accomplish that goal we need your help.”

Residents are asked to move their cars off the street during any snow storm and avoid pushing snow from their driveway into the roadway. Oftentimes crews plow a street before a resident gets home from work and then pushing snow back into the road makes it look as if crews haven’t been there.

One unfortunate result of snow-clearing efforts is snow from plows collecting in driveways. There is little drivers can do to prevent it from happening as the snow has to end up somewhere. Residents can reduce the amount of snow they have to remove from their driveway approaches by clearing an area before the driveway, in the direction of traffic flow, large enough for the snow coming off the blade to be deposited. Again, pushing snow into the middle of the road is not the solution.

Residents are also being encouraged to install snow stakes at...
their homes to help keep plow drivers from accidentally damaging their grass with the snow plow blades. Simply place them along the edge of your lawn to help plowing visibility then remove in spring. Free stakes can be picked up at the Department of Public Services facility at 26300 Lee BeGole Drive between the hours of 8-5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Snow crews will continue to have a presence in neighborhoods even after storms are done, connecting with residents in their assigned sections, handling any minor clean-up, identifying any issues and addressing concerns.

If you have any questions about snow removal, would like to get the free snow stakes or report a pothole, visit cityofnovi.org or call 248.735.5640. Normal office hours are 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

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**How You Can Help**

There are several ways residents can help make this winter’s snow and ice removal operations much smoother:

- Please be aware that if a snow emergency is declared, vehicles must be moved off of public streets so that plow trucks can safely remove snow and ice. Failure to move your vehicle could result in ticketing and/or towing the vehicle at the owner’s expense.
- Always stay a safe distance of at least 50 feet behind DPS trucks.
- It is your responsibility to clear the sidewalk abutting your property per City ordinance.
- It is also your responsibility to clear around your mailbox, otherwise the U.S. Postal Service may not deliver your mail.
- When your street gets plowed, snow from the plow’s blade gets deposited along the edge of the street – including at the entrance to your driveway. Please be aware that the City does not plow drive approaches. Also, please do not move snow back into the roadway as it creates an added hazard for vehicles, plus it violates the City’s ordinance.
- Occasionally during the winter, potholes will develop – especially when there are multiple freeze/thaw cycles. Please report potholes to DPS and they will be filled as soon as practical.
- Occasionally, items placed in the public right-of-way get damaged by snow removal operations. Please remove items such as portable basketball hoops, lawn ornaments, statuary, etc. so they do not become damaged. The City is NOT responsible for damage to items left in a street’s right-of-way.
- Snow banks and snow plows are kid magnets. Please make sure your children do not play on a street’s snow banks, and that they stay a safe distance away from plows.

Please call the Department of Public Services at 248-735-5640 if you have any questions or concerns about snow and ice removal on Novi’s roads. Normal office hours are 7:30am to 4pm.

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