

Snow Removal in the Town of Bedford

Bedford's Highway Department goes to great effort with staffing and equipment to carry out snow removal on the Town's 97 miles of paved roads, 33 miles of dirt roads, and 12 miles of sidewalk. The Town also handles snow removal for some state and county roads on a reimbursement basis. Highway crews and, depending upon the forecasts, private contractors are called in to handle the operations. The following may answer questions you may have regarding how the Town carries out the task. If you have a concern about road conditions, please call Bedford Highway at 666-7669 or Town Supervisor Chris Burdick at 666-6530 or supervisor@bedfordny.gov.

1. **What are the priorities for snow removal operations?** The first priority is safe streets. The priorities are major thoroughfares (especially to hospitals and schools) followed by secondary roads.
2. **How is snow removal from sidewalks handled?** Sidewalks are one of our toughest problems for snow removal. The Town is responsible for clearing approximately 12 miles of sidewalk in residential areas. Please note that property owners are responsible for clearing sidewalks in commercial area. In any heavy wet snow storm, it is likely that the sidewalks will not be cleared for several days just due to the amount of sidewalks and time it takes to clear the heavy frozen over snow. This assumes that all of our equipment is operating properly. When removing snow from sidewalks, we prioritize and focus on school areas and main thoroughfares first. This includes the Jay Street bridge and sidewalk, the bridge on Route 117 over the Saw Mill River parkway, and the area around Bedford Hills Elementary School and Katonah Elementary School.
3. **Why doesn't the snow plow arrive at the same time after every storm?** There are many factors that affect when a snow plow will reach your location. Snow intensity, icy conditions, wind, temperature, equipment breakdowns and employee staffing, as well as other uncontrollable variables, will affect our normal schedules. A plow route for one truck takes four hours on average to complete, so please be patient. Every effort is made to clear snow and ice promptly.
4. **Why haven't they plowed yet?** This recently was troubling to residents and businesses in Katonah on a Saturday morning following an overnight snow storm. With traffic and parked cars during the day, it is not possible to safely remove snow from the hamlets except at night. In that instance, rain was forecast following freezing conditions. Due to the timing of when the snow and freezing rain ended, removal of snow from the Katonah hamlet was not performed until Saturday night. In that case, Bedford's highway crews worked from 1:00 AM Saturday through 5:00 PM Saturday, and then came back Saturday night through 6:00 AM Sunday morning to clean the hamlets and parking lots.
5. **The snow plow leaves a windrow snow mound in front of my driveway. Can't this be avoided?** In order to clear the roadway, snow must be plowed to each side of the road. This, of course, leaves a windrow, or snow mound in front of driveways, which is difficult for our drivers to control. In order for our drivers to provide the most safe, efficient, and cost-effective snow removal, continuous movement is required. There are thousands of driveways on Bedford's plow routes, and therefore it would be nearly impossible for drivers to stop and clear each driveway entrance. Safety is also an issue since snow plow trucks have limited rear visibility, and clearing each driveway would require the driver to back the truck up, putting children, animals and other vehicles at risk of not being seen by the driver. In order to minimize the windrow, clear snow from your driveway to the right of the driveway when looking towards the road. This will minimize what is pushed back in front of your driveway by the Town's plow truck.
6. **The Postal Service will not deliver our mail because of a windrow or because the road has not been plowed.** Postal Service regulations stipulate that snow removal in front of the mailbox is the owner's responsibility. While our crews make every effort to clear shoulders of snow as soon as possible, our first priority is opening up all roads to traffic.
7. **After roads are cleared, when are they swept of excess sand?** Our sweeper cleans the entire Town each spring as soon as conditions allow.