

# 2019

## Winter Storm Procedures and Policies



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# Winter Storm Procedures and Policies

## General

The Township of Millstone's Department of Public Works is responsible for the snow removal and winter maintenance of 128 miles of roadways. This is equivalent to a four lane highway from Millstone to New York City. With the addition of 158 cul-de-sacs and dead ends, which increases the time it takes to clear streets.

Snow and/or ice removal from some major thoroughfares in the township is carried out by others. These roads include State Route 33; County roads are Sweetman's Lane, Stage Coach Road, Monmouth Road, Woodville Road, Perrineville Road, Trenton Lakewood Road, Rising Sun Tavern Road, Rochdale and the Route 571 portion of Millstone Road (Between Trenton Lakewood and Stage Coach). Mitchell Road is the responsibility of the Assunpink Wildlife Management Area.

**In the event of a Fire or Medical Emergency, Public Works staff and equipment provide assistance to clear the area for emergency vehicles to and from a scene. Millstone Township Fire Department also has their own snow removal vehicle that is used to clear a path for their equipment.**

## Storm Preparation

During the fall season the Department of Public Works begins the process of preparing for winter storms. This means full system checks on snow removal vehicles, plows and sanders. In addition to the installation of over one mile of snow fence in open field areas. The purpose of the snow fence is to limit the extent of windblown snow from accumulating on the roadways.

The Department of Public Works monitors weather reports from various sources and shares the information with personnel involved in the township's response to winter storms. In the event of a moderate to major storm the Millstone Office of Emergency Management, Township Committee, New Jersey State Police, Millstone Township Fire Department and Emergency Medical Squad may discuss the communities needs based on the particulars of that pending storm and review the pre-described action plan.

Forty eight hours prior to a winter storm Seasonal Snow Plow Drivers are contacted and provided an estimated time for work start. All Seasonal Snow Plow Drivers operate township owned equipment and most have been on the township roster for several years and are designated to plow the same routes as in previous years. This increases efficiency and reduces snow and/or ice removal times. Within this time period snow and ice removal equipment is prepared by Public Works employees and put on standby.

Twenty four hours prior to a winter storm, Monmouth County Public Works, through a shared service agreement, applies liquid calcium brine to primary township roads. They are Millstone Road, Prodelin Way, Baird Road, Agress Road, Backbone Hill Road, Clarksburg Road, Schoolhouse Road and Charleston Springs Road. The purpose of the brine is to prevent ice from adhering to the roadways. This pretreatment also saves the township two to three times the amount of salt it would otherwise need to spread to remove the snow and/or ice. The liquid calcium brine is a milky white and can be hard to detect after application.

## **Winter Storm Action Plan**

The township is divided into pre-determined zones. Primary roadways are made passable or treated first. Secondary roadways and cul-de-sacs are secondary. Each zone has at least one large single or tandem axle truck with a sander and is designated to keep primary roadways passable for their zone. Working in conjunction with the larger trucks could be up to three smaller pickup trucks with plows. The smaller trucks concentrate on secondary roadways, cul-de-sacs and intersections.

During the duration of the winter storm, crews work continuously to keep at least one drive lane open in either direction of the roadway. However some winter storms are capable of overwhelming even the most well organized and efficient work crews. A continuous circuit is run through all zones for the duration of the winter storm. All Public Works Drivers have a snow removal sheet that has a list of all the roads located in their zone. The drivers log their time on the roadways.

## **After The Winter Storm**

When the storm has subsided, crews continue to address problem areas and push back the snow and/or ice curb to curb. Curb to Curb does not mean that the curbing will be exposed when snow removal is completed. This is largely depending on the quantity and weight of the snow and/or ice. Once again primary roadways are completed first, then secondary roadways. Each cul-de-sac can take an experienced operator up to thirty minutes to clear, depending on size of cul-de-sac and accumulation of snow fall. With a total of 158 cul-de-sacs it takes time. Clearing of walkways and parking lots at municipal buildings occurs during this period.

After a storm Public Works employees work to remove snow and/or ice from storm drains, intersections and other areas that it may cause a potential hazard. The continued application of salt to shadowy roadways or areas that are prone to melting and refreezing overnight will also occur.

## **How You Can Help**

- 1) Stay home, unless absolutely necessary. Many accident victims during Winter Storms state that they underestimated the conditions of the roads and were usually on their way to do something that could have waited. Don't get in an accident for a gallon of milk.
- 2) The State of NJ on occasion will call for a "State of Emergency". This usually because it is better to have residents stay safe and provide snow removal equipment room to remove snow.
- 3) **DON'T CROWD THE PLOW.** Stay back from plow trucks and equipment. A fully loaded salt truck cannot stop quickly. The salt spread from the back of the truck can damage your vehicle. Public Works is not responsible for damage occurring to vehicles that get too close to snow removal equipment.
- 4) Remove all cars and objects (i.e. garbage cans, basketball hoops, etc) from the street prior to the start of the storm. Township Ordinance Number 96-21, §I states that "**No person shall park a vehicle on, or leave a parked vehicle on, any snow and/or ice covered streets with the Township. Any person found to be in violation of the ordinance**

**shall be fined up to five hundred (\$500.00) dollars for each offense."** If it is required the Township, County or State Law Enforcement can have the vehicle towed at the owner's expense.

- 5) Do not dump, blow, shovel, and push snow and/or ice onto a Township road. Township Ordinance Number 6-5-78 (Municipal Code 20-3.1 "Prohibited Actions") prohibits this action. The homeowner is responsible if they or their contractor, deposits snow onto Township roads. This is to avoid damage to the road or road surface or to the traveling public or causes or results in obstructing or delaying the movement of traffic.
- 6) Millstone Township's roads are narrow in some areas and with additional drivers to contend with, it slows down the progress of snow and/or ice removal.
- 7) Parents, please speak to children about the hazard of building snow forts and igloos along roadways. Children become entrapped in collapsed snow banks every year.
- 8) Operation of unregistered vehicles (quads, snowmobiles, motorcycles, motorbikes, golf carts, or motorized carts) is not permitted on township roads. This is a hazard to the operators of this equipment, and to other motorists.
- 9) Be patient, snow removal is an arduous and time consuming task with many variables. Temperatures of the air and ground surface, wind speeds, time of year, accumulation, duration, and type of snow and/or ice all play into the snow and/or ice removal efforts.
- 10) Do not be misled by snow removal vehicles traveling with their plows in the up position. There are a numerous reasons for this. There could be a failure on the vehicle or plow, equipment may need fuel, it may be designated to another zone, it may be from another agency, the road may have been recently salted and time is needed to allow the salt to break up the ice.
- 11) The Township of Millstone is not responsible for damage to mailboxes, sprinkler lines, sprinkler heads and/or lighting that are place in the Township right-of-way. Only in the occurrence of a snow removal equipment hitting the item. Wet heavy snow and/or ice can snap a mailbox post very easily, especially if the mailbox post is rotten.
- 12) Wait until the Township roadways are plowed before clearing the driveway at the street. Snow plows do not pick up snow; they push it to the side of the road. Inevitably snow from the road is pushed in plowed driveways. Snow plow operators cannot be expected to constantly angle the plow to the opposite side of the road.
- 13) If you choose to remove the snow from your driveway prior to the roads being cleared here are a few tips to lessen the amount of snow pushed into your driveway.
  - a. Remove snow away from the opposite direction of traffic. If you are standing looking at your house it will always be the right side.
  - b. Please refer to the diagram below.
  - c.

PRIVATE DRIVEWAY

SNOW PLOWED FROM PAVEMENT

CLEAR THIS AREA

Shovel Snow In Direction of Traffic

**CLEARED ROADWAY**

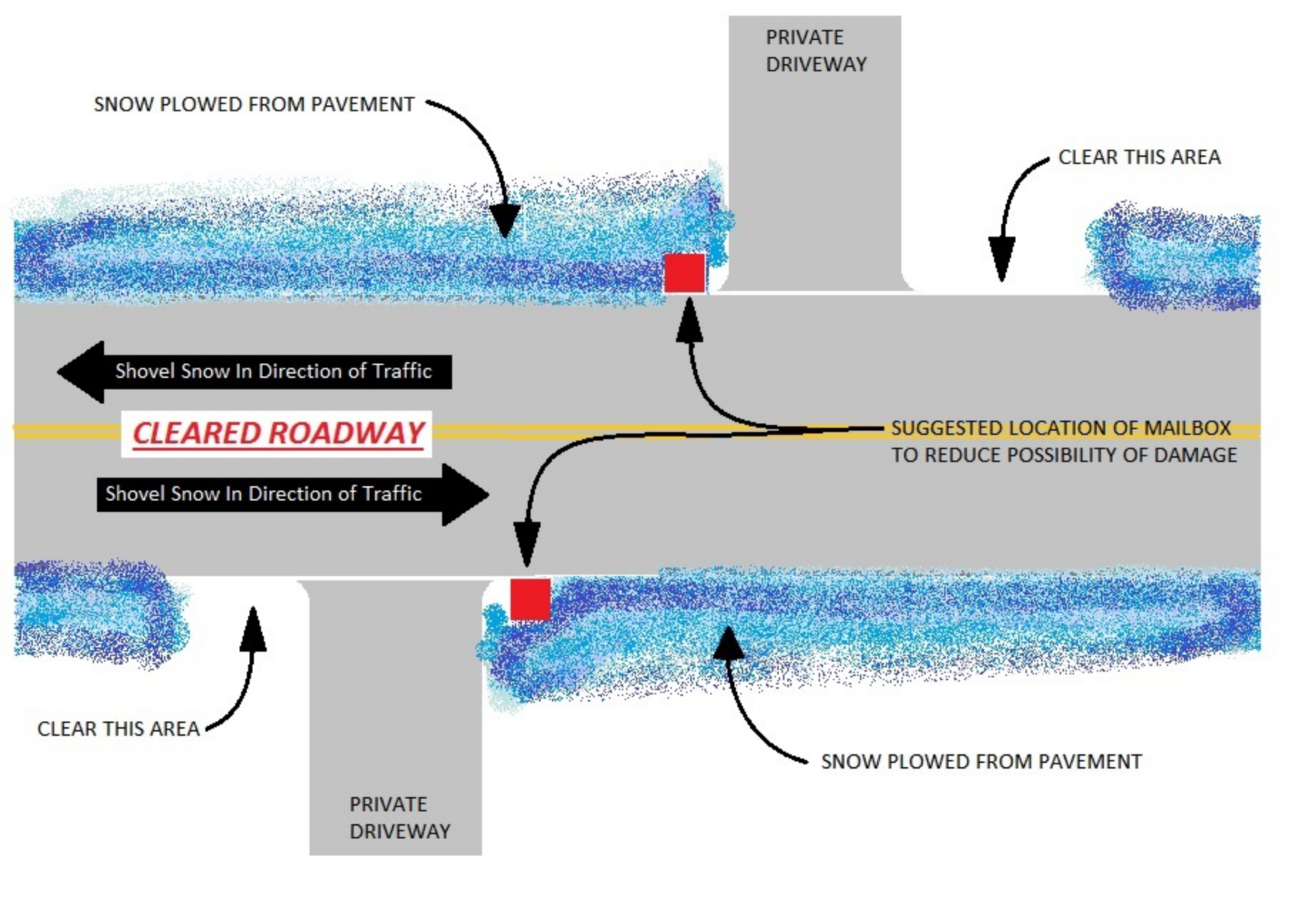
Shovel Snow In Direction of Traffic

SUGGESTED LOCATION OF MAILBOX TO REDUCE POSSIBILITY OF DAMAGE

CLEAR THIS AREA

PRIVATE DRIVEWAY

SNOW PLOWED FROM PAVEMENT



## **Damage to personal property left in the Right-of-way.**

The Department of Public Works will not be responsible for personal property damage from snow being discharged from snow removal equipment. The responsibility for making repairs or replacing damaged property shall be borne by the property owner.

**Only if a mailbox and/or post is damaged by direct contact from our snow removal equipment will the Township replace it.**

### **Mailbox Replacement Procedure:**

- ❖ Department of Public Works to be notified of damage as soon as possible (732-446-6774 or j-borsuk@millstonenj.gov).
- ❖ Inspection of mailbox and/or post to determine cause of damage. Photographs will be taken of damaged mailbox and/or post.
- ❖ Public Works Supervisor and/or Township Administrator will determine root cause of damage (improper installation of mailbox, rotten wooden post, plow operator error, etc.) and notify resident of decision.
- ❖ If it is determined the mailbox was damaged by township equipment, the mailbox and/or post will be replaced by Public Works.
  - Standard Post Master General approved unit installed.
  - If the resident so chooses they may decide to be reimbursed to an amount not to exceed \$100 for a new mailbox and/or post. If a reimbursement is given then the installation of mailbox and/or post is the responsibility of the owner.
  - Reimbursement will occur after a copy of the paid receipt and proper forms are completed and turned into the Finance Department. The Township Committee is needed to sign off on and approve a check to be drafted. This process may take several weeks.
- ❖ If it is determined that the damage was not caused by the plow blade or vehicle, no reimbursement will be given. All actual repairs and/or replacements shall be the responsibility of the resident.
- ❖ Most common reasons for mailbox damage during winter storms are rotten wooden post and/or mail box installation not meeting U.S. Postal Service standards, in regard to location and construction.

### **Instructions for Mailbox Placement from United Postal Service:**

- ❖ Position mailbox 41" to 45" from the height of the road surface to the bottom of the mailbox or point of mail entry.
- ❖ Place your mailbox face 6" to 8" back from the edge of the road.

- ❖ Put your house number on the mailbox.
- ❖ If your mailbox is on a different street from your residence, put your full street address on the box.
- ❖ Use a 4" x 4" wooden support (weather treated) or a 2"-diameter standard steel or aluminum pipe.
- ❖ Avoid unyielding and potentially dangerous supports, like heavy metal pipes, concrete posts, and farm equipment (e.g., milk cans filled with concrete).
- ❖ The post should be no more than 24" deep or installed in concrete.

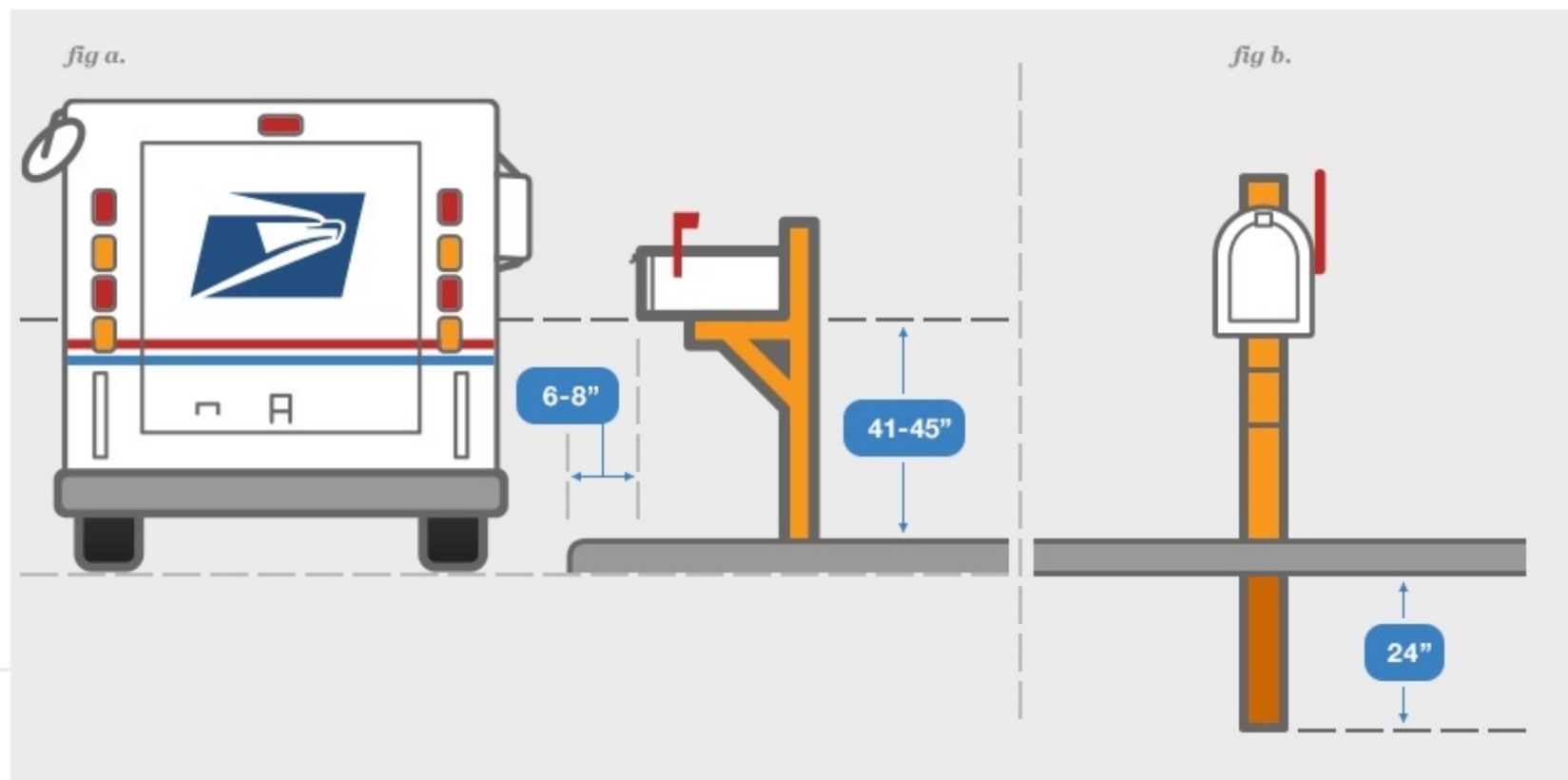
\* See Mailbox Installation Diagram for additional information.

A properly installed and maintained mailbox will withstand the snow removal operations that occur during the winter months.

It is very uncommon that a mailbox is directly contacted with snow removal equipment. The average number of mailboxes that receive direct contact from snow removal equipment during a snow storm is less than 1 percent. Non contact mailbox knockdowns average more than twenty or more during a major snow storm.

Personal property, such as basketball hoops, toys, garbage cans, etc. are to be removed from the township right-of-way prior to a storm event. Remove all cars and objects (i.e. garbage cans, basketball hoops, etc) from the street prior to the start of the storm. Township Ordinance Number 96-21, §I states that **"No person shall park a vehicle on, or leave a parked vehicle on, any snow and/or ice covered streets with the Township. Any person found to be in violation of the ordinance shall be fined up to five hundred (\$500.00) dollars for each offense."** If it is required the Township, County or State Law Enforcement can have the vehicle towed at the owner's expense.





***Mailbox Installation Guide***  
***Courtesy of United State Postal Service***