VICTORIA, BC — Although Victoria may be a “City of Gardens”, we can still get our share of the white stuff. Snow and ice clearing is a big job. We need to work together as a community to keep streets and sidewalks clear and safe, and keep people, goods, and services moving.

At this time of year, the City of Victoria monitors weather forecast and tracking sites daily, as well as pavement temperature sensors. Already this year, the City’s anti-icing truck has been out applying a layer of “brine” (salt and water) on hills and bridges and major Victoria roads. When snow starts falling, City trucks begin de-icing and ploughing, and crews start to clear “first priority” sidewalks, which include downtown transit stops and wheelchair ramps, and sidewalks fronting City properties downtown.

Snow clearing tools for Victoria businesses and households should include shovels, sand, and environmentally sensitive ice melt products to remove snow and ice from sidewalks and driveways. Rock salt is harmful to concrete sidewalks, pets’ paws and the environment.

Now is also the time to refresh an emergency kit with a working flashlight, radio, new batteries, and candles and matches, and to have plenty of food, essential medicine and extra blankets on hand. The City’s Recipes for Disaster list the supplies residents and businesses need to cope for a minimum of three days in the event of a heavy snowfall or power outage. To view the recipes online, visit: www.PrepareVictoria.ca

Residents and businesses are reminded that under the Streets and Traffic Bylaw, they are required to clear snow and ice from sidewalks in front of their property by 10 a.m. each day. Victoria citizens are encouraged to make arrangements with neighbours in advance to clear each other’s sidewalks in the event they are away from home or work when it snows. Remember the elderly or disabled, who will appreciate the assistance with snow removal. Please do not shovel or plough snow onto city streets or sidewalks as it slows snow removal.

Those who do not comply with the Bylaw may face a fine of $150 per ticketed offence (per day) and a ticket can be issued up to six months after an offence has occurred. With over 450 kilometres of sidewalks in Victoria, it would be too costly for City taxpayers to take on the entire task of removing ice and snow.

To learn more about the roles and responsibilities of residents and businesses when it snows, and how the City prepares for snow and prioritizes snow clearing, visit: www.victoria.ca/snowclearing

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