



Snow Clearing in Victoria

What Residents Need to Know

Victoria may be a “City of Gardens”, but we can still get our share of snow. Snow and ice clearing is a big job, and unfortunately City trucks, equipment, and crews can’t make it everywhere at once. We need to work together as a community to keep streets and sidewalks clear and safe, and keep people, goods, and services moving. Everyone has a role to play when it snows.

What is my role when it snows?

The City’s *Streets and Traffic Bylaw* requires an owner or occupier of land remove snow and ice from a sidewalk fronting their property **by 10 a.m.** each day. The Bylaw applies to residents and businesses in Victoria.

If you live in a single family home or duplex, you are responsible for removing ice and snow from the sidewalk fronting your home.

If you live in an apartment, condominium or townhouse, the property owner/manager is responsible for appointing staff or contractors to remove snow and ice **by 10 a.m.** each day. These types of properties are considered businesses.

What products can I use to remove ice and snow?

Environmentally friendly “ice melt” products can be used to remove ice and snow. Products that are corrosive and include a skull and crossbone on the label, including rock salt, are not acceptable as they can harm the environment and concrete sidewalks.

What is the penalty for not clearing snow and ice?

Those who do not comply with the Bylaw may face a fine of \$125 per ticketed offence (per day). A ticket can be issued up to six months after an offence has occurred.

What if I’m away from home when it snows?

Even if you’re away from home when it snows, you are still responsible for making sure snow and ice are cleared from

sidewalks fronting your property **by 10 a.m.** each day. You are encouraged to make arrangements with neighbours in advance to clear snow for one another when one is away.

What about people who are unable to shovel snow and ice?

If you are unable to remove ice and snow, please ask friends, neighbours and family for assistance before it snows.

Alternately, please remember your elderly or disabled neighbours who would appreciate your assistance with snow removal. And remember to check on them in the event of a severe storm.

Why doesn’t the City clear all of Victoria’s sidewalks?

With over 450 km of sidewalks in Victoria, it would be too costly for City taxpayers to take on the entire task of removing ice and snow.

How does the City of Victoria prioritize its snow and ice response?

The City has a *Severe Weather Response Plan* to guide ice and snow removal operations in Victoria. To ensure emergency services and main arteries are maintained, the City prioritizes its snow clearing efforts based on the following priorities:

First Priority

roadways: emergency routes, major, arterial streets, hills, bridge decks, bicycle lanes, and access routes to hospitals, fire stations and police headquarters

sidewalks/frontages: downtown transit stops and wheelchair ramps, and sidewalks fronting City properties downtown

Second Priority

roadways: senior care and homeless shelter facility streets; secondary and collector roads, left turn lanes with traffic loop detectors

sidewalks/frontages: transit stops and sidewalks fronting City properties outside of downtown; and community centre frontages

Third Priority

roadways: residential roads, City-owned surface parking lots, downtown parking spaces

sidewalks/frontages: Galloping Goose Trail and Westsong Walkway

Who is responsible for clearing snow and ice from bus stops?

City crews will remove snow and ice from all downtown transit stops as they are a First Priority. Bus stops located outside of downtown will be cleared by City crews as a Second Priority.

Who is responsible for clearing wheelchair ramps?

The clearing of ice and snow from downtown wheelchair ramps is a First Priority for City crews. Wheelchair ramps located outside of downtown are to be cleared by the fronting residence or business.

What area does Victoria’s “downtown” cover?

Victoria’s downtown is in the general shape of a rectangle, and is currently bordered by Chatham and Caledonia Streets, Belleville and Blanshard Streets, and Victoria’s waterfront along Store and Wharf Streets. (SEE MAP ON REVERSE.)

How long does it take for City crews to complete Priority roadways and sidewalk/frontages?
 Priority roadways and sidewalks/frontages may be completed up to 72 hours after a snowfall, provided that the snow stops falling.

If crews are in the process of clearing Second Priority routes and it starts snowing again, they will immediately return to clearing First Priority areas. In the event of a severe snow storm, it could take up to seven days or more for crews to complete Third Priority areas.

If it snows, will my garbage and kitchen scraps be picked up?

In the event of snow, your garbage and kitchen scraps collection day may be delayed and occur on the next available day. Your garbage pick-up may also be delayed if Hartland Landfill is closed due to snow.

If it snows, will my recycling be picked up?

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is responsible for the Bluebox Recycling Program. Every effort will be made to pick up curbside recycling in the event of a snowfall. For more information, visit: crd.bc.ca or email hotline@crd.bc.ca or call the CRD Hotline at 250.360.3030.

What is the best way to get around when it snows?

When it snows, please leave your car at home and take transit or walk to where you need to go.

Will on-street parking be available after a snowfall?

On-street parking spaces may not be accessible immediately after a snowfall as City crews need to temporarily store snow in parking bays. This snow will be removed once all Third Priority areas have been cleared. You can park at parkades and parking lots in the event of snow.

Will bicycle racks be available for cyclists after a snowfall?

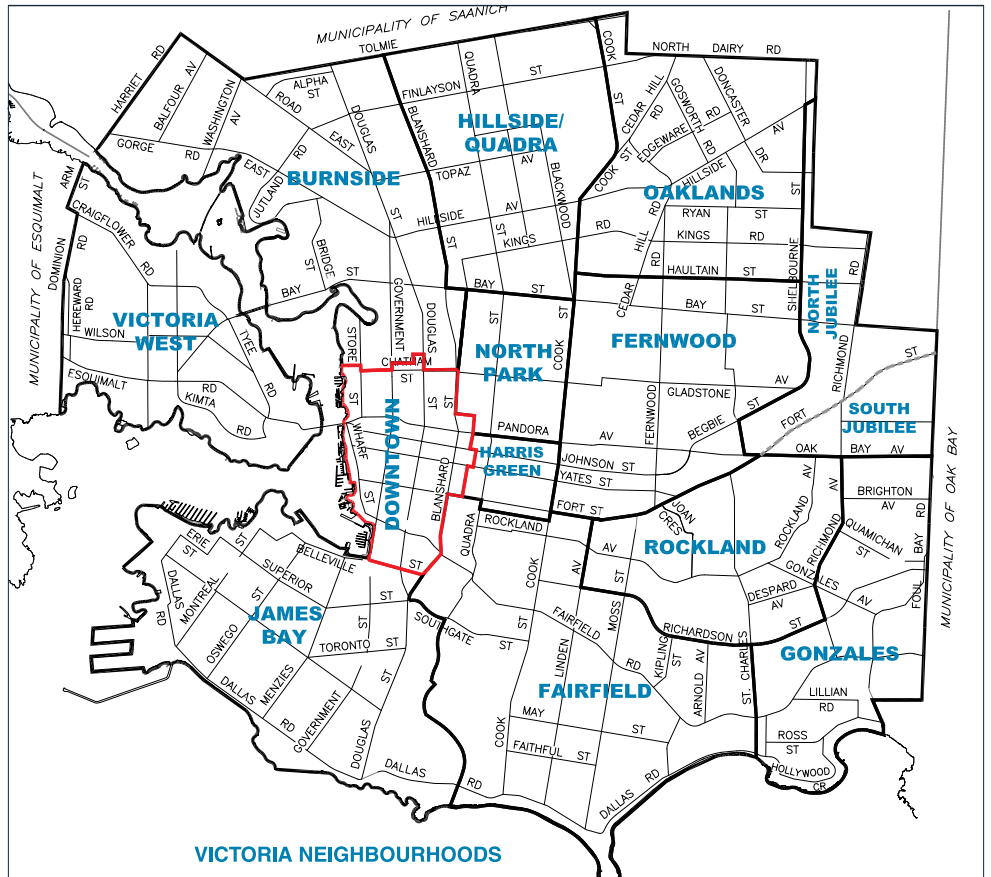
Crews clearing sidewalks in front of City buildings will make bicycle racks available. Businesses are encouraged to do the same when clearing their frontage.

What equipment does the City have to remove snow and ice?

The City of Victoria has six trucks with salters/ploughs as well as a number of backhoes, bobcats, snowblowers, small sidewalk ploughs, a front end loader, and one brine spreading anti-icing truck for pre-treating Victoria roads.

How does the City prepare for snow?

City staff monitor several weather forecast and tracking sites as well as pavement temperature sensors when snow or ice



is predicted. Prior to a storm, the City's anti-icing truck is sent out to apply a layer of "brine" (salt and water) on major Victoria roads, including hills and bridges.

When the snow starts falling, City trucks begin de-icing and ploughing, and sidewalk crews start to clear First Priority routes.

Crews also conduct 24-hour patrols during a storm to continuously check road and sidewalk conditions.

Are the City's ice and snow removal practices "green"?

In 2008, the City began using an environmentally sensitive brine solution to pre-treat roads prior to a snowfall. This practice sped up the melting process, resulting in cost savings and less salt on Victoria roads.

Snow Preparation Tips

There are simple things you can do to prepare for snow:

- Make sure you have the necessary clothing and tools in advance for removing ice and snow, and only use environmentally sensitive products.
- Remove compacted snow and ice from your sidewalk by 10 a.m. daily to make walking safer for others in your neighbourhood. Snow shovelling is demanding on the body, so be careful not to over do it.
- Place snow on the boulevard where possible and make sure to keep fire hydrants visible and accessible.
- Don't place snow and ice from your sidewalk and driveway into the roadway or onto your neighbours' sidewalk or driveway as this creates a hazard for motorists and pedestrians.

- Place snow on the right side of your driveway (when facing a street) to help prevent snow ploughs from moving snow back into your driveway entrance.
- Help your neighbours if they are unable to clear ice and snow from their sidewalk.
- Know the location of catch basins on your street and keep them clear of snow and ice to help prevent flooding when warmer temperatures and rain return.
- Leave your vehicle at home and use public transit or walk to where you need to go.
- If you must drive in the snow, check current road conditions and weather; plan your route and leave lots of time; dress for the weather; take a shovel and sand; and bring someone with you to assist should you get stuck in snow.
- Ensure you and your family have the basic supplies, important medicine and contact information. For more information, visit: VictoriaReady.ca or call 250.920.3373.
- Keep this fact sheet handy or post on your fridge for family members to refer to.

Where can I find more information on snow clearing?

For helpful information on snow clearing in Victoria, visit: victoria.ca/snowclearing

If you have a question, comment or suggestion, please email Public Works at snowclearing@victoria.ca or call 250.385.5711.

Please allow us 72 hours to respond, or longer in the event of a severe snow storm.