

CHASE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ROADS

Snow Removal Plan and Policies 2021

The following snow removal plan covers the procedures that will be followed in the event of a winter snowstorm. Any of the operations may be altered by the Highway Superintendent or Road Foreman depending on weather conditions and/or emergencies. Regular winter working hours between the months of November and March are 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. No overtime work will be performed on weekdays, weekends or holidays unless authorized by the Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman, and/or Commissioners.

SECTION 1, INTRODUCTION: The Roads Department of Chase County is responsible for providing snow removal for approximately 670 miles of gravel and asphalt and Minimum Maintenance County roads. The Roads Department does not guarantee that county roads will be free of snow and ice after plowing. Bare, dry roads should not be expected and will not be provided. The Road Department attempts to maintain adequate traction for vehicles properly equipped for winter driving conditions. Planning for a winter storm is difficult. The differences in rate of snowfall, moisture content, and temperature, time of day and wind velocity make each storm unique. However, it is the intent of this program to establish general policies and procedures to make travel within the County as safe as possible. Safety is the primary concern and all persons involved with this plan will consider safety first in their operating procedures. The Chase County Highway Superintendent will be responsible to format and implement this Snow Removal Plan and Policy with the input and approval of the Chase County Commissioners.

SECTION 2, PREPARATION: The County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners will evaluate the Roads Department's efforts from the previous winter. Any adjustments necessary to improve the overall Snow Removal Plan and Policies will be made. Fall preparation will include properly winterizing all equipment. All equipment must be maintained in top operating conditions while it is being used in other operations during the spring, summer and fall months. Fall preparation will also include a meeting of all Chase County Roads Department Employees. This meeting will be used to review equipment operations, safety issues, equipment maintenance, and to review all priority snow routes.

SECTION 3, CLASSIFICATION OF COUNTY ROADS:

PRIORITY ONE: The County Roads designated PRIORITY ONE includes all SCHOOL BUS ROUTES, within the county as established by the School Districts and with the input of the County Commissioners.

PRIORITY TWO: The County Roads designated as PRIORITY TWO includes all MAIL ROUTES within the county as established by the area Postmasters and with the input of the County Commissioners.

PRIORITY THREE: The County Roads designated as PRIORITY THREE, includes other roads that have an occupied residence within the mile or a portion of a mile without School Bus Service and Mail Delivery Service. These miles are established by the County Highway Superintendent with the input of the County Commissioners.

PRIORITY FOUR: The County Roads designated as PRIORITY FOUR includes all other roads that have no occupied residence within the mile, PRIORITY FOUR roads include all Minimum Maintenance Roads. These miles are established by the County Highway Superintendent and with the input of the County Commissioners.

SECTION 4: LEVEL OF SERVICE: Plowing will begin on all PRIORITY ONE, TWO AND THREE County Roads when snow accumulation reaches **three (3) inches or more**, with PRIORITY ONE roads being opened first, then PRIORITY TWO roads, followed by PRIORITY THREE roads. After all roads are opened satisfactorily to allow vehicles in and out access to all occupied residences, additional road widening will be done. PRIORITY ONE roads at this time will be plowed and widened from road edge to road edge, followed by PRIORITY TWO roads. In some cases, Priority Two County Roads are also Priority One County Roads and they will have already been widened. After all PRIORITY ONE and PRIORITY TWO County Roads have been widened, PRIORITY THREE County Roads will be widened from road edge to road edge. If snow continues, road widening operations on Priority Three County Roads may have to be suspended and redirected to Priority One and Two County Roads, before the completion of plowing operations on Priority Three County Roads. PRIORITY FOUR COUNTY ROADS: The County Roads Department will generally not plow PRIORITY FOUR COUNTY ROADS unless there is an emergency declared by an adjacent landowner. Plowing of Priority Four County Roads will not be done until all Priority One, Two and Three County roads are done, road edge to road edge. The County Highway Superintendent will determine if the emergency warrants plowing requested County Roads.

Emergency Snow Removal Priority Route Maps Snow removal priority maps will be mailed to all school districts and post offices that use county roads and an emergency snow removal priority route map will be available for pick-up upon request by the public starting October 1.

Gravel Roads Gravel windrows must be leveled as much as possible in the fall and gravel left on the road, so the windrow doesn't get bladed into the ditch. Gravel should remain on the road for possible snow melt. If there is too much grass and weeds in the windrow, move windrow to the south on the east-west roads and to the east on the north south roads. No operators or equipment will be dispatched for snow removal on gravel roads until at least **three (3) inches or more** snow has accumulated. Snow and wind conditions will determine when plowing operations proceed due to poor visibility, safety conditions, snowfall per hour, etc.

Snow removal will not proceed until poor visibility is no longer a problem, unless requested for emergency services. Maintain snowplow blade one to two inches above gravel road to keep from removing gravel off the road. Plow snow to the south edge of east-west roads and to the east edge of north-south roads whenever possible to prevent drifting if the wind is out of the northwest. Plow according to wind conditions. In a very heavy snow, plow both ways and leave snow windrow beyond the road shoulder to let snow melt away from the road and not on it. Open priority routes for one lane traffic before starting secondary routes. Do not widen large drifts until entire route has been cleared to at least one lane traffic. Motor grader operators are responsible for clearing intersections where gravel and pavement meet. Minimum maintenance roads will not be cleared unless there is an emergency.

Paved Roads Motor graders will be used to blade paved roads. Tight blade paved roads to remove as much snow and ice as possible without harming the pavement surface. Plow snow out to a minimum of two feet beyond pavement edge, where possible, to let snow melt away from the road and not back on it causing ice conditions.

De-Icing Treatment Operations Not applicable at this time.

Bridges All snow will be removed from bridges as roads are cleared. DO NOT leave snow windrows along bridge rail. This creates a ramp condition which could cause a vehicle to jump the guardrail. Remove snow beyond the bridge ends and guardrail, 15 to 20 feet, so snow will not melt back onto bridge causing ice conditions.

Special Circumstances Rarely does the county receive the same amount of snow county-wide. Under these circumstances, employees and equipment will be moved from the least heavy snowfall area to concentrate on the hardest hit portions of the county. This will be done only upon authorization of the Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman, and/or Commissioners.

Abandoned Vehicles/Stuck Motorists The sheriff's office will be notified when abandoned vehicles are found stuck in roadways posing a traffic hazard or stuck in snowdrifts. The vehicle license number will be provided to the sheriff's office, so they can contact the owner. The sheriff's office can make the determination as to calling a towing company and billing the owner of the vehicle for towing services. Vehicles will only be towed from roadway or snowdrift if they are not attended to and pose a traffic hazard. The vehicle will be towed at the owner's expense. If the vehicle is attended, the sheriff's department will either try to help push out the vehicle or have them towed, at the vehicle owner's expense. They are never pulled out by sheriff's department.

SECTION 5: SNOW REMOVAL PERSONNEL: In the event of a snowstorm, the Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman, and/or Commissioners will contact the operators as to when to proceed with plowing operations. All equipment operators must be ready to commence snow removal operations at any time it is determined that operations must begin. Primary responsibility for snow removal planning, operation direction and snow removal decision making will be that of the County Highway Superintendent with the assistance of the Chase County Roads Foreman and/or Commissioners. The Chase County Highway Superintendent, the Road Foreman and/or Commissioners will decide when to call snow removal personnel to work and for how long they will work. The start time will be 6:00 a.m., unless otherwise specified, and go until it gets too dark to safely operate, or unless otherwise specified. If the decision to commence snow removal operations is made during the normal work day, operators and the Foreman must be prepared to cease the activities they are engaged in and begin snow removal operations. Employees from all 3 districts will be required to clock in at this time. If conditions become such that snow removal must begin after normal working hours, the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners will then notify operators to report for snow removal. Weekends and holidays, operators will only be called out when the roads are impassable. Rest periods and/or meal breaks will be coordinated by the Foreman and operators until all **PRIORITY ONE** County Roads have been plowed. Employees will normally be limited to a maximum of 12 hours of continuous snow plowing. This is in consideration of the safety of the operator, the public and liability to the County. Employees may be asked to work longer than 12 hours during a **SNOW EMERGENCY**. All operators have a map of their area with emergency snow routes clearly marked. These routes will be strictly followed by priority and will not be deviated from for any reason other than an emergency. After the prioritized routes have been cleared, a systematic approach will be taken to clear the rest of the area, with school bus and mail routes taking priority. Cooperation and communication between the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners and Chase County Roads Department operators are critical during a winter storm. The Sheriff's Department will keep the Roads Department informed as to county road conditions and be on alert for trouble spots including icy roads and bridges and reduced visibility at intersections. It may be necessary, if circumstances dictate, to conduct snow removal on a 24-hour basis, should this situation arise, the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners will divide the employees into two groups with each group working 12-hour shifts. Fueling of equipment will occur at the end of each shift to prepare for the next shift's operation. In the event fueling becomes necessary before the end of the shift, such fueling will be staggered to avoid unnecessary congestion at the fuel pumps. If an operator cannot make it back to town to fuel up at the pump, the portable fuel tank in the back of a pickup will be used. Equipment operators must obey **ALL TRAFFIC LAWS** during snow removal operations. If an employee for the Chase County Road

Department comes upon a stranded vehicle during snow plow operations, they must first check the vehicle for occupants, should the vehicle be abandoned, they will contact the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman, Road office, and/or Commissioners. the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman, Road office and/or Commissioners will contact the Sheriff's Office for assistance to locate the owner of such abandoned vehicle to get it moved. If an emergency exists, the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners will instruct the employee to remove the vehicle by using the best method available. Should the employee find injured occupants, will call 911 and Dispatch will activate the Emergency Medical System. If the stranded vehicle has uninjured occupants and ask the employee to assist in removing the stuck vehicle, the employee must contact the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners for instructions. the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners will instruct the employees with what procedure they may take to remove the stuck vehicle. NO County Employee will hook a chain or tow strap/cable to a vehicle without the authorization of the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners unless it is a life-threatening situation. Operators who are involved in an accident are required to report the accident immediately to 911/the Sheriff's Department, then the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners. Operators must complete an accident report and submit it to their Foreman/Road office before the end of the shift.

SECTION 6: ADJACENT DRIVEWAYS: The cleaning of adjacent driveways to County Roads is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. When plowing snow, several passes are sometimes necessary before a county road is clear. Every effort is made to prevent plowing into driveways; however, the Roads Department will not clean driveways adjacent to County Roads. Cleaning driveways, that are plowed closed by the Roads Department, is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. It is generally best for the adjacent property owner to open driveways AFTER the snowplows have completed their operations.

SECTION 7: SNOW REMOVAL PLAN AND SNOW ROUTE MAPS: A copy of this Snow Removal Plan and Policy and Maps indicating all PRIORITY ONE, PRIORITY TWO, PRIORITY THREE, and PRIORITY FOUR County Roads will be kept at the Chase County Highway Superintendent's office, all the Chase County Department Shops, Chase County Courthouse Road Office, and the Chase County Sheriff's Department.

SECTION 8: CITIZEN COOPERATION: In order to achieve the best possible result and in the most efficient manner from the Chase County Roads Department's snow removal operations, all citizens of Chase County are requested to cooperate fully with the Roads Department. During SNOW EMERGENCIES and winter storm conditions, all residents are asked to remove their parked vehicles from all County Roads, if

possible. This will allow snow plows an opportunity to clear the County Roads quicker and with fewer passes, saving both time and money. Motorists should always allow plenty of space near the snow plows and avoid passing a snow plow whenever possible. Operating a snow plow can be a dangerous task. When ice, snow, wind and cold create treacherous operating conditions, one of which is limited visibility, the snow plow operators require tremendous operating skill and courage to operate. In these poor conditions when motorists operate their vehicles in an unsafe manner, could force the snow plow from the road, causing harm and/or damage. As outlined in SECTION 5, if a Chase County employee, while they are plowing snow, comes upon an abandoned vehicle that is blocking a county road and must be moved, all attempts will be made to locate the owner to get the vehicle removed. If the owner cannot be located and the vehicle must be removed, steps will be taken to move the vehicle. Chase County or the employees of Chase County cannot be held liable for damages caused by removing the abandoned vehicle. As also outlined in SECTION 5, if a Chase County employee, while they are plowing snow, comes upon a stuck vehicle with occupants that is blocking a county road and is asked to assist the owner in removing the stuck vehicle and is instructed by the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners to assist, the owner of the stuck vehicle must make the hookup of the chain or tow strap/cable to their vehicle. Chase County or the employees of Chase County cannot be held liable for damages caused by assisting a stuck vehicle.

SECTION 9: DEPARTURE FROM POLICY: Chase County acknowledges the policies set forth in this program are of a general nature and realizes conditions may be so unusual or unexpected that a departure from this program may need to be authorized. When conditions warrant, the County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners, after consulting with the Chase County Sheriff, may order a departure from this policy when conditions are such that the departure from this policy is necessary for the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and road department personnel of Chase County. The County Highway Superintendent, Road Foreman and/or Commissioners is authorized to publicly announce that nonemergency travel is not recommended when conditions warrant such a warning. This policy is not, nor is it intended to encompass all details of Chase County's snow removal operations.

SECTION 10: POLICY PRIORORITY: To the extent that any previous policy or past practice written or unwritten conflicts with the provisions of this policy, it is hereby void, and all personnel will conduct themselves in a manner that conforms to this policy.

SECTION 11: EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

Chase County Department of Roads District #1 – Wauneta Shop: (308)-394-5632

Chase County Department of Roads District #2 – Imperial Shop: (308)-882-5318

Chase County Department of Roads District #3 - Lamar Shop: (308)-882-2167

Chase County Highway Superintendent Cell: (_____ Office: (_____

Chase County Roads Foreman Cell: (308)-883-1499

Courthouse Road Administrator Office: 308-882-7520

911 Dispatch: 308-882-4748

Emergency: 911