

PUBLIC WORKS

Pipeline



Keep it down! City enforces noise ordinances for construction projects

By Emilie Kastner

Before beginning a construction project, residents and contractors should be aware of local ordinances.

The City follows the State standards for noise issued by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Different noise standards exist for residential, commercial and industrial areas. Projects in residential areas are most restricted.

City ordinance 1040.03D states: “No person shall engage in or permit construction and repair activities involving the use of any kind of electric, diesel or gas-powered motor vehicles or machine or other power equipment, audible beyond the property line of the property where the activity is occurring, except between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. and 7 p.m., Saturday, Sunday and holidays (New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas).”

Bigger projects or new commercial, industrial or high-density residential

development may have more restrictions as deemed necessary by the City Council, especially when these projects are in close proximity to single-family residential areas, said Planning Director Cary Teague.

Noise can only be authentically measured by the Health Department if it is long lasting, such as that caused by a generator or traffic, since the sound level-measuring device used takes an hour-long survey of the noise, said City Sanitarian Sherry Engelman. Short, infrequent sound bursts cannot be authentically measured.

“No construction noise is permitted before 7 a.m. or after 9 p.m. on weekdays,” said Chief Building Official Steve Kirchman. “If the construction is happening during off hours, we don’t need to measure the noise to enforce the code. Residents should call the Police.”

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Sidewalk Maintenance
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Winter Parking Rules
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Calling all artists! The City of Edina wants water-related artwork to feature in its annual consumer confidence report. Submit yours to the Public Works Department, 7450 Metro Blvd., Edina, MN 55439, before April 15, 2012.

Street sweeping keeps Edina beautiful and the environment healthy



The City of Edina's Street Department sweeps Edina's streets to keep them looking neat and clean and to keep the environment and waterways safe and healthy.

Each spring and fall, Edina's streets are swept free of debris, curb to curb. In the spring, once the snow has melted away from the curb, the street sweepers go out in full force. Sweepers remove salt, silt, trash and other debris, preventing clogs in storm drains and pollution in rivers and lakes.

Street crews do their best to sweep Edina's streets twice in the spring and once in the fall, weather permitting. Streets are also swept continually through the summer.

It is important that residents not blow, rake or sweep leaves and grass clippings into the street. The storm water system and street sweepers cannot handle the added volume, according to City of Edina Street Foreman Shawn Anderson. Decomposing plant matter that enters lakes and rivers encourages algae and harmful plant growth. Anderson says that this harms wildlife, creates murky water and pollutes rivers and lakes.

Any plant matter that is swept up is hauled to a company that composts leaves and grass. Residents may be able to have their yard waste composted by contacting their waste hauler for more information about disposal.

For more information about composting, contact Recycling Coordinator Solvei Wilmot at 952-826-0463. For more information on street sweeping, contact the Public Works Department, 952-826-0376.

– Compiled by Jordan Gilgenbach

Street crews aim to repair potholes quickly

Drivers' worst enemies seem to lurk around every corner in the early spring. Nasty potholes can wreak havoc on vehicles, so the City works to quickly fill them.

Potholes are formed by water seeping into cracks of pavement and freezing in the winter. The water expands, creating cracks and weakening the pavement. Traffic driving over these weakened spots can cause pieces of pavement between the cracks to loosen and dislodge, creating a hole.

Throughout the year, the Street Department works hard to fill these holes quickly to keep drivers and their cars safe. During the winter, cold mix is used to temporarily fix the holes. Cold mix is not permanent, but serves its purpose until a hot mix can be used to patch potholes. According to Shawn Anderson, City of Edina Street Foreman, the "asphalt season" runs from early May to the beginning of November, weather permitting. The roadways must be warm and dry for hot mix to be used in repair. Unlike cold mix, hot mix contains asphalt cement, which creates a permanent bond when dry.

Each May, the Street Department goes on a "pothole blitz," patrolling Edina's streets and repairing potholes as they are seen. Thousands of potholes are repaired during the pothole blitz. More than 140 tons of asphalt are used in the repairs.

However, some potholes can't wait until May. Residents are urged to contact Edina Public Works and report problem spots. The most effective way is filling out the form online at www.CityofEdina.com/PublicWorks.



Reported problems are distributed to crews and given top priority.

The City spends more than \$100,000 annually on pothole repair.

To report a pothole on a City road, visit the "Engineering & Public Works" section at www.CityofEdina.com/PublicWorks or call the Public Works Department at 952-826-0376.

To report a pothole on a county road or highway or state aid street, such as France, York and Vernon avenues, visit Hennepin County's website, www.hennepin.us, or call 612-592-0300.

To report a pothole on a state road or highway, contact the Minnesota Department of Transportation at 651-296-3000 or visit www.dot.state.mn.us.

– Compiled by Jordan Gilgenbach

Residents required to take care of their own leaves



By **Jordon Greenlee**

As trees shed their leaves, the City reminds residents that they are responsible for collecting and removing the leaves and other yard debris from within the confines of their yards.

Residents should compost their leaves or contact licensed haulers for proper disposal. Residents who have made arrangements with a licensed hauler are required to use paper bags or containers clearly marked as “compostable.”

“Since January 2010, State law has required that yard waste be placed in compostable bags,” said Recycling Coordinator Solvei Wilmot. “Yard waste can no longer be placed into plastic bags.

“Residents should check with their refuse hauler to make sure that they are signed up for yard waste removal, which is separate from recycling services.”

When residents rake and remove leaves from their yards, they cannot dispose of leaves from their properties onto City streets. “When we clean the streets, we would like to clean the dirt, not leaves and debris,” said Assistant Public Works Director Roger Glanzer about fall street sweeping.

The City of Edina will not remove or pick up compost, tree branches, leaves or other yard waste collected from residents’ properties. If residents choose to hire a private lawn service to remove yard debris, contractors should be advised of City ordinances to not dispose of residential waste into City streets or gutters. Residents and private

contractors should properly dispose of leaves and other yard debris to prevent damage to ponds and wetlands. Residents are also encouraged to utilize collected yard waste by generating mulch and compost that can be used on lawns.

According to City Code Section 1200.02, “No person shall obstruct, encroach upon, encumber, or interfere wholly or partially, with any street, boulevard, alley, sidewalk, easement, park or public ground.” Fallen leaves must be kept out of City streets to help prevent clogging in storm sewers which can lead to water runoff, backups and flooding.

Residents are also encouraged to inspect gutters in front of their properties and remove any debris that appears to be blocking passage to storm sewers. By keeping City storm sewers clear, residents can reduce damage to neighboring lakes and ponds.

“If debris and leaves get into the storm sewers during the winter, they will freeze up and clog drainage,” said Glanzer. “Leaves, sticks and grass also pollute lakes and ponds when they get into the storm sewer.”

For more information on leaf removal, contact Wilmot, 952-826-0463.

– Emilie Kastner contributed to this story

Inspect your mailboxes before the snow flies

By Jordon Greenlee and Emilie Kastner

Under the heavy weight of snow and ice, property damage can easily occur over the winter months. One of the most common and frequent property casualties comes in the form of damaged mailboxes. Who is responsible for the damage?

City plows can inadvertently cause damages, but so can a variety of other things. Many mailbox damages are the result of poor weather conditions, ranging from heavy snow to excessive ice, or due to lack of maintenance. When damage to a mailbox is caused by poor weather or lack of maintenance, the City is not responsible for replacing or repairing it.

Residents are encouraged to inspect mailboxes and posts, as well as maintain and correct all prominent damages before winter. “Most mailbox damages are the result of rotten posts or a mailbox poorly anchored to the post,” said Street Foreman John Scheerer.

During the winter months, residents should also monitor the quantity of snow and debris surrounding their mailboxes. After City plows have removed snow from streets, residents should clear snow surrounding mailboxes to prevent snow from becoming compacted and creating future difficulties for mail delivery vehicles. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to do the detailed snow removal in front of the mailbox to assure continued mail delivery.

The United States Postal Service has codes for Customer Mail Receptacles. According to No. 3.1.4, “Customers

must keep the approach to their mailboxes clear of obstructions to allow safe access for delivery. If USPS employees are impeded in reaching a mail receptacle, the postmaster may withdraw delivery service.”

The City evaluates complaints of damage on a case-by-case basis, allowing residents the ability to have residential property damages evaluated effectively. If an inspection of a damaged mailbox determines the principal cause was a result of a collision involving a plow or other piece of City equipment, the Street Department will replace and install a standard size, non-decorative metal mailbox. If necessary, a 4-by-4-inch decay-resistant wood support post will also be installed by the City in the spring. Alternatively, the City will reimburse the owner of a mailbox damaged by the City \$50 for the replacement of the mailbox and post.

In an average season, the City may receive as many as 50 to 70 calls in regards to mailbox damages, Scheerer said.

For more information, contact the City of Edina Public Works Department, 952-826-0376.



Plow drivers guided by marking stakes

When snow is heavy and City of Edina plow drivers begin working to clear snow from streets, stakes sometimes highlight hazardous areas. Marking stakes, used exclusively in winter months, are installed by the City of Edina in the fall and identify obstructions and reduce damage to residential and City property.

While residents may submit a request for marking stakes to be placed on their property, it is at the discretion of the City to decide what locales require marking stakes to alert plow drivers.

In the past, some residential properties have endured damage due to unique weather and plowing conditions. As a result, the City will not always place stakes in the same location each year. Residential requests will be managed and responded to on an individual basis.

As the City works to improve roadways and reconstruct neighborhoods by installing curbs and gutters, fewer stakes will be used.

“Our goal is to reduce the number of stakes that we put in,” said Assistant Public Works Director Roger Glanzer. “We want to be able to do a good job plowing. We put in hundreds of them and it takes a lot of labor hours to put them in and remove them.”

Stakes are typically removed late-March to early-April, once the frost melts and the ground becomes soft enough to pull the stakes out.

For more information on snow stakes or to request them on your property, contact the City of Edina Public Works Department, 952-826-0376.

– Compiled by Jordan Greenlee and Emilie Kastner



Boulevards designed for utilities and snow

Snow plow drivers do their best each winter to clear streets of snow. However, a boulevard is sometimes damaged by a snow plow.

Any sod damage that is caused by plows will be repaired by the City of Edina’s Public Works crews in the spring. The City provides new sod, dirt or grass seed, but it is the resident’s responsibility to water and maintain it.

John Scheerer, City of Edina Street Foreman, said that a boulevard is designed for utilities and snow. The only thing that should be in the boulevard is a mailbox. Any other items or landscaping is at risk and the responsibility of the property owner.

If a boulevard on your property is damaged by a snow plow, contact Public Works through the online service request form at www.CityofEdina.com/PublicWorks.

– Compiled by Jordan Gilgenbach

A close-up photograph showing a person's legs in blue jeans and black boots standing on a snow-covered sidewalk. The person is using a blue snow shovel with a wooden handle to clear the snow. The shovel is positioned in the foreground, partially buried in the snow. The background is a vast expanse of white snow.

Obstructed sidewalks can lead to injuries

Because pedestrians use sidewalks to safely get from one part of the community to another while exercising and enjoying the outdoors, it is important that they be properly maintained year round.

To keep pedestrians safe, sidewalks must be cleared of all ice and snow during the winter. According to Edina City Code 1200.03, “All snow and ice shall be removed from a sidewalk by the owner of the property adjoining the sidewalk within 48 hours of the cessation of the precipitation.” This means property owners must clear sidewalks of all snow or ice within two days of the end of a snowfall.

If snow and ice are not removed within seven days after receiving a written notice from the City, residents may be charged for the cost of removal by the City, which could exceed \$300.

The City has some sidewalk plow routes. On these sidewalks, the City will remove snow. France Avenue, York

Avenue, Gleason Road and 70th Street are examples of these areas.

Once spring and summer come around, sidewalks may need to be repaired. Sometimes, sidewalk panels move or shift in the spring as the ground thaws. Property owners are required to fix sidewalk hazards on their properties.

Residents can report trip hazards that need to be repaired to the Public Works Department using the online service request at www.CityofEdina.com/PublicWorks.

– Compiled by Jordan Gilgenbach

Residents must remove snow from driveways, walkways and sidewalks

As snow falls, residents can expect to see the familiar sight of snow plows moving down streets and through neighborhoods. As snow begins to pile in residential driveways, shovels and snow blowers can be seen uncovering hidden sidewalks and pathways.

While the City of Edina removes snow and debris from streets, residents are responsible for shoveling snow from walkways, driveways and sidewalks on their properties.

Any snow removed from walkways, driveways or sidewalks must remain on the property. Snow cannot be plowed into City streets or onto a neighboring property. If a sidewalk exists on a private property, the owner is

responsible for plowing or shoveling the snow to prevent injury of passing residents.

When clearing snow, residents should be cognizant of snow accumulation on their properties, not allowing snow piles to grow too high and become sight obstructions for other vehicles and residents. In addition, residents should also clear snow from around fire hydrants located on private property. Fire hydrants must be visible and accessible to emergency workers.

For more information, contact the City of Edina Public Works Department, 952-826-0376.

– Compiled by Jordon Greenlee

Hiring someone to plow? Remember to check City regulations

It is often convenient to hire someone to plow a driveway. Private snow plow contractors should be aware of local regulations before they begin their winter work.

Private plows must not deposit snow into or across a roadway. Any snow that is removed from a sidewalk or driveway must remain on that property. If a property owner is concerned about the landscaping, private snow hauling may be a good option.

The City of Edina Public Works Department will monitor private snow plowing contractors on a regular basis, though the property owner is ultimately responsible. Homeowners will receive a warning letter for violations on the first offense. Upon a second offense, homeowners may be subject to a fine of up to \$700.

– Compiled by Jordan Gilgenbach

City urges residents to keep fire hydrants visible

In the event of a fire, time is essential. Firefighters need access to fire hydrants to quickly put out a fire. Hydrants should be visible and accessible at all times.

According to Minnesota State Fire Code, there must be a three-foot cleared radius around all fire hydrants. Edina Fire Department Fire Marshal Tom Jenson said the clearing must be free of both snow and landscaping.

When landscaping, residents should keep in mind where they plant. It is important to think about the future when planting bushes, trees and doing other landscaping. Small bushes and seedlings will grow and could hide a hydrant.

It is important to keep hydrants clear of snow in the winter. Snow should be shoveled around a hydrant to provide adequate access to its top and side discharges. Snow can be deposited to the side of or behind the hydrant.

If a hydrant is not shoveled out, Jenson says to do the “neighborly thing” and shovel around it. It is not necessarily the property owner who’s responsible for the hydrant, even if it’s on his or her property. A hydrant can help save lives at any house in a neighborhood.

With about 2,000 fire hydrants in Edina, it’s clear why everyone is needed to help. Neither the City nor the Fire Department has the time or resources to shovel them all.

“The big thing is to expose the hydrants so they can be found and accessed,” Jenson said. “They are not meant to be hidden. That’s why they are painted red.”

Jenson said a fire truck holds about 750 gallons of water. When putting out a fire, that water can be depleted in fewer than four minutes.

For more information regarding fire hydrants, contact Jenson at 952-826-0337.



Snow plowing and ice control practices help ensure safety

By Jordon Greenlee

To ensure the safety of citizens, the City of Edina uses a snow plowing and ice control policy.

According to the policy, the City will begin snow and ice control operations at the discretion of the Edina Street Foreman, who continually monitors snow accumulation, snow drift and ice conditions on City roadways. Snow and ice control activity is costly, so snow plows will generally not be dispatched for a snowfall of less than 1.5 inches.

“Each storm is different and it takes both proactive and reactive thinking that the City has to do,” said Public Works Street Foreman Shawn Anderson. “Sometimes we have to wait it out and sometimes we have to fight it during the storm.”

When there is more than 1.5 inches of snow on the roadway, the Street Division will plow snow in a way that minimizes traffic obstructions for residents. Typically, the center of roadways will be plowed first, moving snow away and off traffic lanes. On two-way streets, snow will be plowed from left to right. On one-way streets and boulevards, snow will be plowed based on snow storage availability and in consideration of emergency vehicles.

Anderson will determine specific roadways in need of snow removal by City trucks. Snow removal will begin after snow plowing operations, and may be further delayed by weather conditions, personnel and budget. When removed, snow will be hauled to designated snow storage areas.

The City’s snow plowing policy highlights priority roadways and streets to be plowed. The City has effectively

outlined a system to classify streets based on street function, traffic volume and importance to welfare of the community. High-volume routes that act as access roads for emergency vehicles are labeled as “Red Routes” and will be plowed first. Routes providing access to schools and commercial businesses will then be plowed, followed by low-volume residential roadways, and finally alleys and City parking lots.

Snow and ice control operations will be conducted during safe weather conditions. During poor weather conditions, snow plows will be removed from roadways at the discretion of the Public Works Department’s Street Division. Factors that may delay snow and ice removal include severe cold, significant wind, limited visibility and storm duration.

The City will use sand, salt and other chemicals to prevent hazardous ice conditions. The City maintains select sidewalks in Edina, and residents and property owners are responsible for removing snow and preventing ice hazards from sidewalks adjoining their properties.

“The big reason it’s an ordinance is that sidewalks are a big way for people to get around in the City,” said Assistant Director of Public Works Roger Glanzer. “People need to be able to walk on the sidewalks rather than walking in the streets because it can be very dangerous. It’s especially important for handicapped people to get around.”

For more information, call the City of Edina Public Works Department at 952-826-0376.

– Emilie Kastner contributed to this story.

Safety is key to winter fun



Many children enjoy playing outside after a fresh snowfall. While this may be fun, it could be dangerous if precautions are not taken.

It is important that children remain safe and do not make snow forts or tunnels or play on snow piles near roadways. Plow drivers cannot tell where tunnels or forts may be or if children are in them.

“Snow plow drivers are watching the road,” said John Scheerer, City of Edina Street Foreman. “Drivers can’t always see if kids are in forts.”

In addition, plowed snow can be very heavy. It can weigh enough to collapse a tunnel or fort and injure children inside them. Hidden forts are even more dangerous

when plow drivers go “winging,” pushing the snow further off the street to make room for more plowed snow.

If children want to build a fort, Scheerer recommends they build it near the house, never near a roadway. Forts should also be built without a top that could collapse.

Forts and tunnels should be reported to City of Edina Public Works using the online request form at www.CityofEdina.com/PublicWorks or by calling 952-826-0376. Public Works personnel will work with the property owner to remove the fort or tunnel.

– Compiled by Jordan Gilgenbach

“Noise” continued from cover

The City receives about six construction-related noise complaints per month, which is a low number considering the large amount of construction projects under way at any given time, Kirchman said. Although the Health Department is ultimately responsible for noise regulation, it is usually the Building Inspections Department that coordinates compliance with contractors.

The first step in resolving complaints relating to construction noise is to inform the contractor. Contractors generally aim to retain positive relationships with the City and community in order to maintain good reputations and be approved for future building projects. However, if this initial step

is ineffective or the noise is outside of permissible hours, a contractor should be reported to the Police for disturbing the peace.

“Contractors cannot be cited unless the noise violation is observed by the police,” said Kirchman. “Police officers are familiar with these calls and will respond quickly. If residents call too late, after 7 a.m., enforcement is limited because it is within the lawful hours of construction.”

To report a construction-related noise violation outside of permissible hours, as specified by the City Ordinance, call the Police Department’s non-emergency phone number at 952-826-1610.



Residents asked to follow winter parking rules

To prevent damage to vehicles from snowfall and plows and the inconvenience of citations and towed vehicles, the City encourages citizens to remain informed about local parking laws and restrictions.

According to City regulations, no vehicle may be parked on a City street, highway or alley under a variety of conditions:

- When 1.5 inches or more of snow has fallen. Once streets and roadways have been plowed to the curb line, residents can then park vehicles on designated roadways.
- For six hours after a snowfall has ended, unless City traffic signs specifically allow vehicles to park on roadways.
- From 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. Nov. 1 through March 31.

Cars parked on the street during winter months impede snow plow drivers from effectively removing snow from

City streets. By adhering to City regulations, residents can avoid unwanted parking tickets and towing of vehicles.

City ordinances are strictly enforced. The Edina Police Department records and tracks vehicles not in compliance with City ordinances and regulations. When a vehicle is in violation of winter parking regulations, the Police Department sometimes issues a warning by means of an explanation card to the owner of the vehicle. If the Police Department encounters the vehicle violating regulations a second time, the owner will be issued a citation.

During significant weather conditions and snow events, if a vehicle is obstructing the path of a plow, the Police Department will attempt to locate the owner. If an owner cannot be found, the City will tow the vehicle.

For more information, contact the Edina Police Department at 952-826-1610.

– Compiled by Jordon Greenlee

