

Snow Season Frequently Asked Questions

Why does Minneapolis have snow emergencies?

Throughout the winter, our crews are out whenever it snows plowing, treating the streets or hauling snow. A Snow Emergency is declared when a significant amount of snow falls. Crews will then plow all 1,400 miles of streets and alleys in Minneapolis over the following three days.

The only way we can plow the streets completely is to get parked vehicles out of the way. Snow Emergency parking rules make that possible. When a Snow Emergency is declared, a series of parking restrictions go into place over the course of the next three days.

Each of the three days of a Snow Emergency has different parking restrictions. These parking restrictions give snow plow crews the ability to get to all city streets in order to keep vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians and everyone moving throughout the City.

What are the parking rules for the three days of the snow emergency?

A Snow Emergency is always declared by 6 p.m. to give everyone enough time to move their vehicles.

On **Day 1**, the first night of a Snow Emergency, City crews plow streets designated as **Snow Emergency Routes**. These routes are marked by red snow emergency signs, and blue street name signs. On Day 1, drivers can't park on either side of these streets. Day 1 lasts from 9 p.m. to 8 a.m. the following morning.

On **Day 2** of a Snow Emergency, City crews plow the **even side** of the streets, as well as parkways, so residents cannot park on the even side of those streets or on parkways on day 2. These streets have green or brown street name signs. The even side of the street includes property addresses ending in 2, 4, 6, 8, or 0. Day 2 begins at 8 a.m. the day following the Snow Emergency declaration and lasts until 8 p.m.

On **Day 3** of a Snow Emergency, City crews plow the **odd side** of the streets, drivers cannot park on the odd side of those streets on day 3. These streets have green or brown street name signs. The odd side of street includes property addresses ending in 1, 3, 5, 7, or 9. The Day 3 parking rules start at 8 a.m. and last until 8 p.m.

What happens when parked cars are in the way during a snow emergency?

It's important to make our streets drivable, particularly for ambulances, fire engines and other emergency vehicles that need to be able to reach every home and business in the city. We cannot fully

plow the streets during a snow emergency when vehicles are parked on them. Vehicles parked in violation of a Snow Emergency are subject to being ticketed and towed to the Minneapolis Impound Lot.

What should I do if my car is towed?

If your car is towed for violating snow emergency parking rules, it will be taken to the Minneapolis Impound Lot which is located at 50 Van White Memorial Blvd. The impound lot is open 24 hours a day during snow emergencies.

If your car has been towed, you will be responsible to pay for the parking ticket and a towing charge. A storage fee will also apply if your vehicle is left at the Impound Lot for more than a day. The Impound Lot accepts cash, personal checks, VISA, MasterCard and American Express.

You can call **311**, or **612-673-3000** if calling from outside Minneapolis, to find out if your car is at the Minneapolis Impound Lot and the towing/storage fees that may apply. You can also find out what forms of documentation (such as proof of ownership, a valid government-issued photo ID, etc.) you will need to recover your vehicle. You can also use the online search tool to check for your vehicle:
<https://www.minneapolismn.gov/getting-around/parking-driving/impound-lot/vehicle-search/>

Why were some of the cars on my block not ticketed/towed when in violation of the rules?

Due to staffing and tow truck constraints, it is not possible to ticket and tow every vehicle in violation during a Snow Emergency. Residents can call 311 or visit our website to report any violations

How can I find out if a snow emergency has been declared?

- Snow Emergency Hotline: By calling the 612-348-SNOW hotline, you can find out if a snow emergency has been declared. If a Snow Emergency is in effect, the hotline will have information on that day's parking restrictions.
- 311: You can call 311 to find out if a snow emergency has been declared.
- City website: The City's website, minneapolismn.gov will tell you if a Snow Emergency has been declared. You can also sign up to be notified by an automated phone call, text message, or email whenever a Snow Emergency is declared.
- Social media: You can like or follow the City's Facebook or Twitter Snow Emergency Accounts to be notified of a Snow Emergency and to see what parking rules are in effect.
- Smart phone app: Drivers who have Android devices or iPhones can download the Minneapolis Snow Emergency app. During a Snow Emergency, the app will tell them the parking rules for that day. It also has the Snow Emergency parking map, which allows users to see the parking rules in detail by entering an address. The latest version of the app will also now send push notification alerts for Snow Emergencies.

What are the sidewalk snow clearing rules?

Minneapolis Ordinance 445.20 states that property owners are required to clear sidewalks of snow and ice. Property owners in single family homes and duplexes must clear sidewalks within 24 hours after it

stops snowing. All other properties must clear sidewalks within 4 daytime hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) after it stops snowing.

What happens if I do not shovel my sidewalk?

If you do not properly clear your sidewalk of snow and ice, you may receive a letter informing you to do so. If you have not cleared the sidewalk by the time of the follow up inspection, crews will remove the snow and ice and bill you. If you do not pay the bill, the fee will be added to your property taxes.

Why is it important to clear sidewalks?

City sidewalks need to be accessible to everyone year-round. Many in our community rely on sidewalks to get to work, school, errands, appointments and more. Sidewalks that aren't cleared of snow and ice are difficult and sometimes dangerous to use. They're especially challenging for people with limited mobility.

What about corner clearing?

As part of clearing the sidewalks, property owners that live on a corner should clear the curb cutouts at the street corners and crosswalks to the street gutter. Property owners do not have to clear snow piles left by plows beyond the gutter. City crews will do this as soon as possible following a snow emergency.

City staff will clear the approximately 16,000 individual sidewalk corners, beginning with the corners located on the Priority Pedestrian Corridors. The Priority Pedestrian Corridors (PPC) map can be viewed [here](#). Once the corners on the PPC are completed, if conditions allow, crews will continue clearing the rest of the corners with the goal of completing all work within 10 working days.

When are trails and bike lanes plowed?

On street trails and bike facilities are maintained at the same level as the adjoining street. The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board also maintains trails in Minneapolis. A link to their web site, which contains information on trail plowing as well as a live trail plowing status map can be found here: https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park-care-improvements/maintenance/winter_maintenance/

What about clearing around garbage and recycling carts?

In order to empty the carts, the City needs residents to shovel a path at least 3 feet wide from the carts to the alley or curb. If the crew cannot wheel your carts to the truck, they may not empty them. Additionally, according to City Ordinance 225.680, the City may charge \$30 per cart if your recycling or organics carts are stuck in the snow on your collection day and it has not snowed within 48 hours.

Who should I call if my street/alley has access issues or is not plowed full width because of cars in the way?

Please report all plowing concerns to 311. The concerns will be dispatched to the appropriate street district to address.