

Winter Weather Reminders from the Public Works Department

Winter weather conditions present several challenges that don't exist at other times of the year. In light of the frequency and severity of the recent winter weather, the Colchester Public Works Department wishes to remind Town businesses and residents of the shared community effort necessary to keep roads and sidewalks safe for vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Snow and Ice Control Plan - Consistent with the Town's Snow and Ice Control Plan, copies of which are available at the offices of the Town Clerk, the Public Works Department, and on the Town web site www.colchesterct.gov, the Town will strive to keep Town-maintained roads in a reasonably safe condition for travelers. Travelers who use Town-maintained roads are expected to demonstrate due care and reasonable caution, especially under adverse weather conditions.

Parking Ban - In an effort to keep roads and sidewalks reasonably safe for vehicle and pedestrian traffic, Town Ordinances 709 and 710 identify the parking ban associated with any snowfall accumulation in excess of ½ in. The ban remains in effect for 12 hours after the cessation of the snow fall. Vehicles parked in violation of this ordinance may have their vehicles towed at the owner's expense.

Sidewalks - Town Ordinances 304 and 305 identify the responsibility of every person owning or occupying any premise abutting upon a sidewalk in the Town of Colchester to maintain that sidewalk free and clear of obstructions including snow and ice. Sidewalks shall be made reasonably clear of snow and ice within 24 hours after cessation of the snow fall. Violators of these Ordinances are subject to fines.

Hydrants - Additionally, residents are requested to assist the Fire and Water Departments by clearing around fire hydrants located on or near their property.

Roadside Basketball Hoops – A possible hazard exists when a portable basketball pole is placed on the side of the roadway. The hoop can extend into the travel lane and can cause damage to passing vehicles and equipment. Residents are requested to remove the pole entirely or, at a minimum, move it well off the roadway as not to interfere with passing traffic. Now that the winter season has arrived, it is critical these poles be moved, as they interfere with snow plowing operations. The Town is responsible for clearing snow back to the curb or edge of pavement. Basketball hoops that extend near the edge of pavement can be struck by side mirrors causing damage to both the truck and pole.

Snowbanks - Children often like to play in the snow embankments on the side of the road. Although they make an attractive recreation area, drivers may not see the child playing, especially if it is snowing. Also, creating caves or tunnels in snow banks is very dangerous as they can collapse or may get covered by additional snow being thrown from the road.

Curbside Refuse Collection - When curbside containers are placed at the roadside for collection, they must be placed off the road. Containers placed in the road are an obstruction during plowing activities. The truck drivers exercise great care when plowing but these containers may not be visible at all times of the day or night. Help avoid a problem by keeping containers in the driveway.

Maintenance of roadways and sidewalks in a reasonably safe condition is a community effort. All the members of the Public Works Department appreciate the cooperation provided by the residents and businesses of Colchester in keeping our roadways safe.