

Winter Driving & Storm Management

WINTER DRIVING & WINTER STORM MANAGEMENT

We live in Northeast Pennsylvania (NEPA). It is a hilly area and we experience many types of storms during the winter season. Storms such as those during the 2013-2014 winter season, for example, were repetitively severe and numerous.

While road conditions inside the POA are certainly a major factor when contemplating winter travel, there are other factors to consider that affect the ability to travel during or after storms. Operator skill level, vehicle type, vehicle equipment, and the importance of each travel requirement also need to be factored in. As an operator, it is essential that you possess winter driving skills equal to the conditions and use a vehicle that is properly equipped for winter operation.

You will be at a distinct disadvantage driving during the winter if your vehicle is equipped with bald or summer tires or if you have limited winter driving experience. Even four wheel drive vehicles not equipped with an aggressive tire tread will sometimes experience traction problems depending on conditions. It is each driver's responsibility to make travel decisions based on whether or not they are equipped to make that trip.

Our roads have been and will continue to be cleared and made safely passible as soon as storm conditions permit. How we handle each snow plowing requirement is storm specific. Many factors are considered including the following:

1. When is the storm projected to start?
2. When is the storm projected to end?
3. Will it be raining or sleeting before, during or after the snow fall?
4. Is this an ice storm, snowstorm or combination of both?
5. Is another storm immediately projected?
6. What is the severity of the storm?
7. What are the road conditions outside of the LWEPOA, and will our contractor even be able to get into the LWEPOA?
8. What time can the contractor get here?
9. Do we need to cinder, salt or not?
10. Is the storm occurring on a school day or a weekend, or a holiday?
11. Is there a school delay and if there is, how long is the scheduled delay?
12. Applying logic and reason. For example, If we are in the middle of a storm that is projected to end at nine, it does not make sense to plow at four thirty and have to plow again after the storm ends.
13. Do the storm results warrant road-clearing maintenance?

All factors come under consideration as we determine if, when, or how we want to begin the clearing process. If we begin maintenance, all traveled roads are included. Our primary roads are cleared first, followed by our secondary roads regardless of what time the contractor gets here. If during the clearing process, the contractor experiences equipment failure, he will repair or replace his equipment and finish the job.

People call wanting to know when the will be plowed and or sanded. It is virtually impossible to accurately tell you when your road will be made passible. We will have the roads made passible as soon as conditions permit.

Remember, no matter how well we clear the roads, you won't be able to travel anywhere safely and in a timely manner if you don't have adequate winter driving skills and a vehicle that is suitably equipped to support your driving requirements during the NEPA winter driving season.

Each year we have a budgeted line item for snow removal. Please note that the budgeted amount is not for unlimited plowing during the winter season. We are billed and pay the contractor by the hour for each hour that he works. We also pay the contractor for each load of cinders, salt and other material that he spreads. An annual contract for unlimited plowing and cindering would be much more expensive especially if we had a light storm winter.

We hope that the above information will provide some insight into our Winter Storm Management efforts and your responsibilities as a member and vehicle operator.