

WYANDOT COUNTY ENGINEER'S OFFICE (WCEO)

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## **WCEO Snow Removal Policy**

The purpose of the Wyandot County Engineer's Snow Removal Policy is to provide the safest possible county roadway system and access routes for the motoring public, public schools, fire, police, emergency aid vehicles, the citizens of Wyandot County and the surrounding communities. Understanding the policy cannot eliminate all the impacts or effects of a snow and/or ice emergency.

This policy is intended to communicate WCEO's preliminary coordination efforts to reduce the threat to public safety from a snow and ice emergency. During inclement weather, the Wyandot County Engineer's Office in partnership with the Wyandot County Highway Department will make every effort to maintain the traffic flow in Wyandot County as close to normal driving conditions as possible.

### **Organization of Staff**

The Wyandot County Engineer oversees the Wyandot County Highway Department, and a crew of employees sufficient for handling snow and ice control for the county roads. The road crew is a group of full-time employees that work year round and who are individually required to maintain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

During normal hours of operation, the County Engineer or the Highway Superintendent confers prior to winter storms approaching the area and the severity of the storm is determined as well as the manpower needed to treat the roads.

After normal hours of operation the roadways are monitored by employees of WCEO and the Wyandot County Sheriff. In the event of inclement weather after hours a decision to work will be made by the Highway Superintendent or the County Engineer. The decision to call in employees will be based on current conditions and safety of the traveling public as well as safety of the WCEO employees.

## **Organization of Equipment**

The Wyandot County Engineer's Office and Highway Department has 13 Snow Routes. Each route is 20-30 miles in length. Routes are serviced by a Single Axle Dump Truck with a capacity of 10 tons of salt or a Tandem Axle Dump Truck with a capacity of 14 tons of salt. It takes approximately 2-3 hours to complete salt/grit mix application and 3-4 hours for plowing and entire route.

Currently WCEO and the Highway Department have only one facility for winter storm fighting. The main office and facility is located in Upper Sandusky, where approximately 2000 tons of salt mix is stored. The facility is equipped with two front end loaders an operator, a dispatcher for all Routes and two Mechanics.

## **Safety**

During the winter season, the Wyandot County Engineer's Office's first priority is to provide safety for all of the motorized public using the county road system.

Here is what you can do to be prepared for a winter storm event, practice caution for you and your family, and drive with care during the upcoming winter season.

## **During a Winter Storm Event**

Do not allow children and pets to play on roadways or on the snow berms as this is very dangerous. Drivers may not see them or be able to stop in time to avoid hitting them.

As snow is plowed from roadways, windrows (a line or row of snow) can be created at the end of driveways and are the property owner's responsibility to clear. Do not shovel or put snow from driveways onto or across county roads as this is unlawful and creates a hazard for other drivers.

If you are removing snow from your property and a county snow plow approaches, there is a strong possibility that you are not visible to the operator. The color of your clothing, the hour of day and weather conditions inhibit visibility. Protect yourself from injury by giving the plow operator extra room to perform the task.

## **On the Road**

If at all possible don't go out until the snow plows and salt mix trucks have had a chance to do their work, and allow yourself extra time to reach your destination. If you must drive in snowy conditions, make sure your car is prepared, and that you know how to handle road conditions.

Snow plows make frequent stops and backup maneuvers, do not drive your car up behind a snow plow as the driver may be unable to see you and inadvertently back into your car. If you are behind a plow that stops, stop your vehicle in such a way that your car looks into the driver's outside rear view mirror, and please give them extra room.

Drivers are also urged to give an oncoming snow truck right of way. During the winter months, the berm or shoulder of the road is often too soft to support the weight of a loaded salt truck. These drivers cannot move off of the road to let oncoming traffic pass on narrow roads. If you see a salt truck approaching on a narrow road please be courteous and pull off into the nearest driveway and let the snow truck pass.

## **Storm Damage & Mailbox Replacement Policy**

**The Wyandot County Engineer's Office strongly advises against the use of plastic mailboxes. The plastic mailboxes are not suitable for the harsh winter weather and become brittle in the cold temperatures we routinely have in Wyandot County. Plastic mailboxes damaged by snow and ice thrown from the plow will be replaced with a standard steel mailbox and will NOT be replaced with another plastic mailbox regardless of the cost of the original mailbox.**

**Although undesired, there is always a potential for damage to mailboxes and fences during the snow removal process. Only properly located and installed mailboxes and fences that are damaged will be repaired at the County's expense.**

**The mailboxes along these county roads are of importance to us and we do not try to damage them on purpose.** However, due to weather conditions some will get damaged. Factors that may lead to box damage include the amount of snow on the road, the wetness of the snow, and the distance of the mailbox from the road.

To put the mailbox damage in perspective I ask that you stop for a second to analyze these details... a single piece of wet snow the size of a regular mailbox can weigh six pounds or more. That six-pound piece of snow may be traveling at 30+ mph and when it hits your mailbox it can do some serious damage. The overwhelming majority of times it is the snow, not the plow, which does the damage to the mailbox.

The Wyandot County Highway Department will replace/repair the mailbox if the following conditions were met:

1. The mailbox was damaged by snow and ice or plow hitting the mailbox.
2. The request is called in the following day after the damage.
3. Property owner or caretaker of the property must report the damage.

The Wyandot County Highway Department will replace the mailbox with a 4x4 wood post, a standard metal mailbox, and all necessary material to complete the job.

If a total replacement is not necessary only the items required to restore the functionality of the mailbox will be used.

**If you happen to be one of the unlucky ones who experience damage to you mailbox please do not panic or get upset. Simply click on contact us link and give us a call.**

Thank you for your cooperation,

Michael B. Kohl, P.E., P.S.  
Wyandot County Engineer

**Please remember, we need your help. Do your part in making this a safe winter.**