



*City of Cortez*  
*Service Center*  
*110 West Progress Circle*  
*Cortez, CO 81321*

## CITY OF CORTEZ EXPLAINS SNOW REMOVAL



During the winter season, the city gets many questions on how we remove snow. Hopefully, this will explain the city's snow removal policies. In partnership with CDOT (Colorado Department of Transportation), the city uses a salt brine solution provided by CDOT to replace the magnesium chloride solution that has been used in the past. This results in a significant cost saving for the city while using a more environmentally-friendly de-icer. We will also wet our sand with this brine solution in order to not mix regular salt with our sand. This also results in further cost savings.

In accordance with our usual practice, the city will pre-wet some major streets and intersections with the brine solution to keep the snow from sticking as easily. On small storms that leave the streets slick with little accumulation of snow, we will sand them - sometimes all the intersections, hills, and dangerous places, and sometimes just the slick places - depending on the storm. We will use a mixture of sand and brine.

The City uses the following priority system for streets:

1. Main Street, Mildred Road, and Empire Street
2. Streets around the schools
3. Downtown area
4. Residential areas

When we plow snow, we use the same priority as when we sand. We will then make a pass down the center of those streets and continue to sand also.

The city will start plowing Main Street when the accumulation is two inches or more, and that depends on whether or not the snow is melting. This also includes plowing Mildred Road and Empire Street. We will also plow these streets to remove slush. When we plow snow, we will sand them at the same time. The ideal time to plow snow is to start about 4:00 a.m. - if we start any later, the traffic is too heavy.

When we plow Main Street, the snow is plowed to the center. If a large win-row is left, we will remove it the next day or when we are through plowing snow (this is done at night when there is less traffic). We will also wet some of the streets with brine after a

storm, which helps the snow and ice melt quicker. If traffic allows, we will go back in and pull the snow away from the curb to make it easier and safer for parking.

We are able to expand our plowing services and time to plow by utilizing split shifts and can keep our plows out longer, particularly during large storms. The city currently has several pieces of snow removal equipment in operation, including two newly-refurbished snow plows and one new plow. In addition, we have one plow for our one-ton truck and two plow set-ups for our standard city trucks - for a total of six plows. We also operate a brine truck with a 1,000-gallon capacity for chemically treating the roadway and de-icing and, when the situation calls for it, we also use a motor grader and two front-end loaders.

In 2008, an ordinance was passed where downtown businesses are to clean their sidewalks after a storm. Sidewalks shall be cleaned by noon of the second day following the last measurable snowfall. The areas this affects are: Main Street from Maple Street east to Highway 145; North and South Broadway; and businesses on the side streets in the downtown area from Maple Street to Harrison Street, between North Street and First Street. This snow removal on the sidewalks is done in order to give safe passage to pedestrians.

If there are any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the public works department at the city service center or call us at 970.565.7320.