

CITY OF LANSING SNOW CLEARING STANDARDS

A Friendly Reminder

- Who:** The City of Lansing is asking for your help in making public sidewalks safe.
- What:** A City Ordinance that requires property owners not to allow any snow or ice to remain on any public sidewalk adjacent to their property for more than 24 hours after snow has fallen or ice has formed.
- When:** Sidewalks must be kept clear at all times except during a weather event in which snow and ice are continuously accumulating. Property owners will have **24 hours** to clear snow or ice after it has fallen or formed the public sidewalk.
- Where:** The public sidewalk within the City of Lansing, including those sidewalks along the front of your property. Those on corner lots are responsible for both the front and side yard sidewalk, including the sidewalk ramps at the intersection adjacent to their lot.
- Why:** Public sidewalks need to be free of snow and ice to provide a safe route for everyday use by your neighbors, postal carriers, school children, the physically challenged, elderly and others.

If you fail to clear the public sidewalk of snow and/or ice within the allotted time period, a City inspector will issue you a violation notice. The notice will be posted on the property and mailed to the owner of record by 1st class mail.

If the sidewalk has not been cleared after notification, City crews will clear it and you, the property owner, will be assessed the cost of the work which includes an administrative fee.

The first 20 minutes of clearing by the City will cost you \$124.00, with every additional 20 minutes effort thereafter costing an additional \$52.00.

The costs associated with the City's removal of snow and/or ice from the sidewalk adjacent to your property will become a lien upon your property. This lien will be in the form of an assessment. The City will follow the State required assessment process, which includes a public hearing where you may plead your case to the City Council.

FAQs:

Q: Why did the City revise this ordinance?

A:. The ordinance requiring property owners to keep their sidewalks clear of snow and ice has been around since the 1890's. This revision allows the City to clear and charge the associated costs to the property owner.

Q. Why do I have to remove snow and ice from the “Public” sidewalk?

A. Like many communities throughout the snowier regions of our country, there are limited resources available to handle the removal of snow and ice from the public street system and sidewalks. Since the 1890’s, our community relied on the property owners to maintain the public sidewalks adjacent to their land, freeing up valuable City resources to clear the streets.

Q: The snow stopped at 11:00 this morning. How long do I have to clear my sidewalk?

A: By City Ordinance you have until 11:00 tomorrow morning, 24 hours after the end of a snow event.

Q: Will the ordinance be enforced on weekends or City Holidays?

A: Technically the requirements for keeping your sidewalk clear are continuously in place. However, enforcement activities will generally occur during normal business hours of the City. Under some conditions removal of snow and/or ice may occur during the early evening hours.

Q: What if I don’t clear my sidewalk?

A: A City Inspector will issue you a snow violation notice stating non-compliance. 24 hours after you receive the notice, the sidewalk will be rechecked and if it is still not cleared, it may be cleared by the City.

Q: What will that cost me?

A: Currently the rate is set at \$124.00 for the first 20 minutes of work and \$52.00 for every additional 20 minute of effort necessary to clear snow and /or ice. The City will clear the sidewalks as quickly as possible. These fees reimburse the City for the costs to perform the work and administrate the program.

Q: How does the City know when I received my violation notice?

A: The ordinance states that the notice is “deemed received” at 5pm two days after it is deposited in the mail not including Sundays or other non delivery days. Failure to receive the notice does not affect the validity of any actions taken.

Q: The City snowplows went through and plowed snow onto my cleared sidewalk. Am I responsible for clearing that?

A: Yes. We ask our drivers to be as careful as possible but some things are un-avoidable and the streets have to get plowed. The snowplows must maintain reasonable speeds to effectively get the snow off the streets. We advise residents with sidewalks close to the street to plan appropriately when/if the snowplows throw additional snow on the sidewalk.

Q: I live on a corner property. Am I responsible for clearing both sides of my property including the ramps down to the street?

A: Yes. The ordinance states “any public sidewalk adjacent to” the property shall be cleared by that owner. This includes any ramps leading down to the street.

Q: I am out of town, away from home, for days or weeks occasionally. What should I do about my snow removal during those times?

A: If you are away from home for any extended period of time you should make arrangements with a friend, relative, neighbor or professional snow removal service to monitor the public sidewalk adjacent to your property for snow and ice removal.

Q: I live on a neighborhood street. Sometimes the City does not plow my street. Why do I have to clear the snow on my sidewalk?

A: Like many communities, the City has a defined policy for clearing snow from streets to enable safe travel for vehicles, with an emphasis on major arterial streets. Sidewalks are used by all types of people during all hours of the day. Keep in mind that children, the elderly, postal workers, and physically challenged people all rely on safe passage routes on sidewalks. If safe passage is not maintained, this creates a hardship for people and worse yet, causes some to use the street as an alternative.

Definitions

Your Sidewalk- any public sidewalk that is adjacent to your property including any ramps leading down to the street whether at corners or mid-block.

Clearing Sidewalk- shoveling and/or salting the adjacent sidewalks the full width of the sidewalk.

Violation Notice - a notice issued by the City notifying property owners that they are in violation of the snow clearing ordinance and that they have 24 hours to clear their sidewalk. This notice is posted at the property and mailed to the property owner.

Weather Event – a winter weather event that causes snow or ice to continuously accumulate.