



Royal Oak

WINTER READINESS GUIDEBOOK



Collaboration plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of snow removal efforts. The operation relies on residents cooperating by relocating their vehicles to driveways during declared snow emergencies. This ensures that city snowplows can navigate residential streets unobstructed, expediting the restoration of safe driving conditions.

Snowplowing priorities are determined based on the volume of traffic on streets, with heavier-traveled streets taking precedence.

Priority I

All major arterial streets, such as 11 Mile Road, will be plowed and/or salted as needed.

Priority II

When Priority I routes are done, crews shift to Priority II routes, which includes connector streets and routes leading to schools. Intersections and drop-off areas at the schools are plowed and/or salted during regular work hours, Monday through Friday only. School areas are done only when they are in session.

Salt is applied exclusively to intersections where the majority of stopping and turning takes place. This permits "tracking" of salt beyond the intersection, and within a few days after a

snowfall, the area is mostly free of ice or snow. Concentrating on intersections protects the streets and the environment, saving the taxpayers money.

Priority III

This covers major storms of more than four inches of snow. The entire city will be plowed, starting with Priority I roads, then Priority II streets (only if school is in session, otherwise, the city goes straight to Priority III), and finally Priority III roads are completed. Salting of intersections begins when dictated by conditions. Plowing is started in a different section of the city after each snowfall as a matter of fairness.

Downtown Area

In the central business district, snow is plowed to the center of the street and then picked up after all local roads are complete.

The goal is to complete plowing and pick-up operations within 24 hours after the snow stops, and it's much easier to do if vehicles are parked off the street. The city thanks everyone for their patience and understanding during this stressful time.

WHAT ACTIVATES A SNOW EMERGENCY?

A snowfall of four inches or more generally defines when a snow emergency is activated.

When a snow emergency is in effect for the City of Royal Oak, all vehicles on residential streets are to be removed or will be ticketed and/or towed. Vehicles are to remain off the streets until plow trucks have gone through the area. Once a snow emergency is called and plowing begins, it takes approximately 24 - 36 hours to plow all city streets, parking lots, dead-ends, and turnarounds, with crews working 12-hour shifts until the process is complete.

FAST FACTS

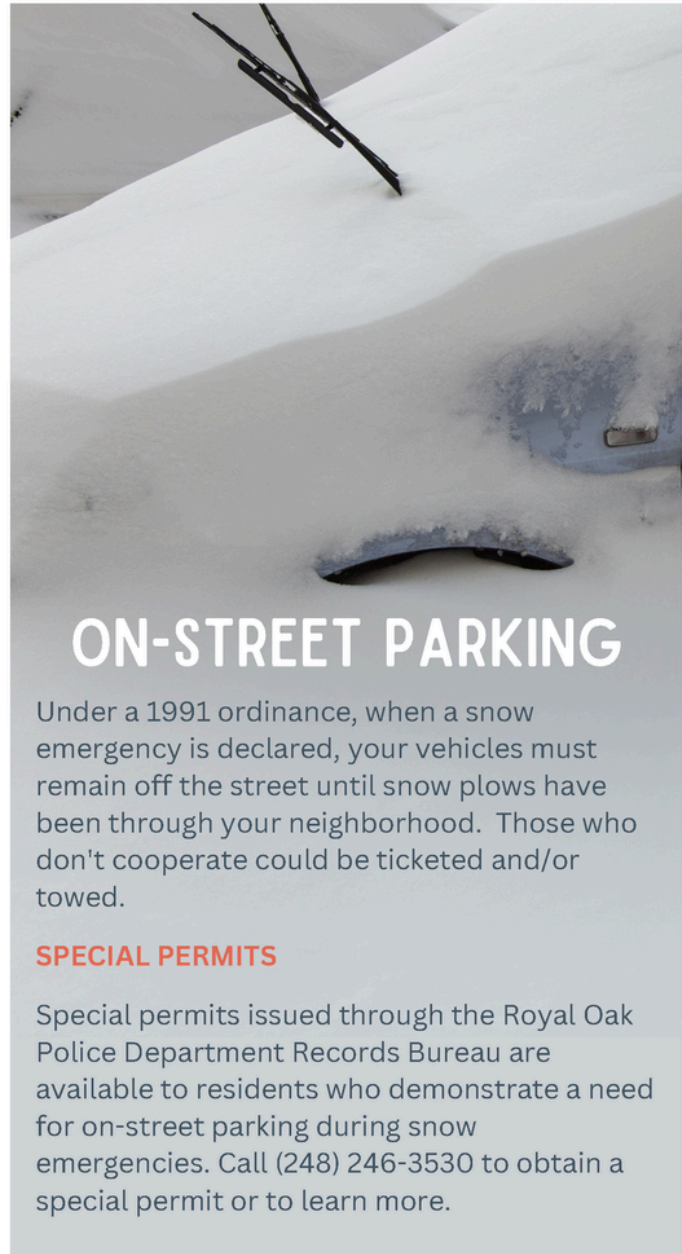
- City snowplows can move unimpeded through residential streets and restore safe driving conditions much quicker when residents cooperate by moving their cars into driveways when a snow emergency is declared.
- Those who don't cooperate could be ticketed and/or towed under a 1991 ordinance requiring cars to be off the street when a snow emergency is declared.

Questions about snowplowing? Call the Department of Public Services at 248-246-3300.

BE THE FIRST TO KNOW WHEN A SNOW EMERGENCY IS CALLED

The city offers several ways to know if a snow emergency is in effect:

- Check the city's website at romi.gov
- Check the city's social media accounts. (Facebook, Twitter & NextDoor)
- Call the **Snow Emergency Hotline at 248-246-3442**
- Sign up for email or text alerts from the Royal Oak Police at romi.gov/alerts
- Need help? Call 248-246-3201



ON-STREET PARKING

Under a 1991 ordinance, when a snow emergency is declared, your vehicles must remain off the street until snow plows have been through your neighborhood. Those who don't cooperate could be ticketed and/or towed.

SPECIAL PERMITS

Special permits issued through the Royal Oak Police Department Records Bureau are available to residents who demonstrate a need for on-street parking during snow emergencies. Call (248) 246-3530 to obtain a special permit or to learn more.

DOWNLOAD & PRINT



Residents can download and print the [Snow Emergency Ordinance \(PDF\)](#) and the [On-Street Parking Exemption Permit Application \(PDF\)](#) at romi.gov/snow.

PLEASE NOTE: Applications for Snow Emergency Exemption Permits will take a minimum of 24-48 hours to be processed.



Residents can follow the progress of the plows using a computer at romi.gov/tracker. When using a tablet or smartphone, go romi.gov/tracker4devices.


It is not necessary to download an app to view the interactive map.

WHAT NEIGHBORHOOD IS PLOWED FIRST?


The plows rotate where they begin. If crews start in the southern neighborhoods for the first snow emergency of the winter season, you can be sure they will start in the northern neighborhoods for the next snow emergency event.

It's the Law - Practice Safe Snow Removal


*Michigan Vehicle Code 257.677a



Don't plow, blow or shovel into or across the road.*



Please keep sidewalks shoveled. Your municipality may require it.



Don't pile snow at the end of driveways in a way that obstructs drivers' vision.*

TIPS FOR SHOVELING DRIVEWAYS

During a snow emergency, the city is often bombarded with calls from residents about the plows leaving behind snow that blocks driveways. We know it can be frustrating.

Our drivers are sensitive to the work residents do to dig out. However, our plows are BIG and cannot articulate where the snow load on the blade will land. The city has more than 200 miles of roadways, and the snow has to go somewhere!

AVOID THE SECOND SHOVEL

There are tips to avoid having the trucks leave behind a significant amount of snow that blocks your driveway.

- Stand in the street and look at your drive. The snow in the area to the right of your driveway is likely the snow that will be displaced when the plow goes past.
- When you shovel, make sure you pile snow to the left side of your drive. If you stack the snow on the right, the plow blade will only have a place to empty snow once it gets to your driveway. You don't want that!
- You can also clear the snow on the roadway approximately 10 feet to the right of your driveway so the plow blade is empty as it goes past.

Several videos on YouTube demonstrate this concept; check them out!



SHOVEL IT FORWARD

The City of Royal Oak asks all property owners—residential and commercial—to join the Shovel It Forward movement and keep our sidewalks free of snow and ice. When sidewalks are clear, we increase the safety and mobility of everyone – from those with disabilities to your favorite letter carrier.

5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SHOVEL IT FORWARD

1. Apply the 7-10 rule. Anytime it snows between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., pledge to clear your walks by 10 p.m. If it snows between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m., commit to clear your walks by 10 a.m.
2. Help your elderly or disabled neighbors remove snow and ice from steps and sidewalks.
3. Shovel your entire sidewalk. Clear a path at least at least 36 inches wide for people using wheelchairs and strollers to pass.
4. If your property is adjacent to curb ramps or bus shelters, pledge to help keep them clear of snow and ice.
5. Don't shovel or push snow into the street.

NEED HELP?

Royal Oak Senior Emergency Services (R.O.S.E.S): R.O.S.E.S. is a program providing a variety of supportive services to Royal Oak residents aged 62 and over and who qualify for a subsidy. You must live in your own home—alone, with a spouse, or with a disabled adult child. Seniors living with non-disabled adult children do not qualify for the subsidy assistance. To ascertain household income, please provide your name, most recent Home Heating Credit, or Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit form. If you live in one of the senior high rises, you will need to provide the HUD Tenant Eligibility & Rent Procedures form.

APPS THAT MAY HELP

- TaskRabbit
- Thumbtack
- Plowz & Mow

**THANKS IN
ADVANCE FOR
BEING A SNOW
ANGEL!**



DOES ANYONE REALLY WALK AFTER A SNOWFALL?

The answer is, "Yes!" Here's a list of people who are outside every day, regardless of weather conditions, and may need to use the sidewalk in front of your house.

- Police and firefighters responding to an emergency
- Letter carriers
- Children walking to school
- Dog walkers
- Individuals who do not own a car, are unable to drive or who rely on public transportation

SHOVELING SAFELY

TIPS FROM THE ROYAL OAK FIRE DEPARTMENT



BE HEART CONSCIOUS

If you have a history of heart problems and are physically inactive, it's best to consult with your healthcare team before starting heavy exercise like shoveling. In addition, don't shovel while smoking, eating or right after consuming caffeine since this may place extra stress on your heart.



DRESS FOR THE WEATHER

Wear several layers of clothing. You can remove a layer if needed. Avoid wearing cotton next to your body. If you perspire, it can become damp, and you'll get chilled. Protect your hands, feet, and face since these are common areas for frostbite. Wear a hat that covers your ears and a scarf to protect your lower face. Mittens are generally warmer than gloves.



DRINK PLENTY OF WATER

Remaining hydrated during cold-weather months is just as important as during warm-weather months. Drink water or sports drinks before, during, and after your shoveling session, even if you're not thirsty.



WARM UP

Before beginning to shovel, stretch your arms, legs, shoulders, and back. You're less likely to injure muscles and joints when they're warmed up.



SHOVEL SNOW WHILE IT'S FRESH

Freshly fallen snow is lighter than snow that has started melting or has been moved by a plow.



WATCH OUT FOR ICE

There may be ice under the snow. Be careful so you don't slip, fall and injure yourself. Learn how to walk like a penguin on icy surfaces.



TAKE IT SLOW

Pace yourself and take breaks if you need to. Safety is more important than speed.



PROTECT YOUR BACK

Bend at the knees, not the back, when lifting the shovel. Lift with your legs bent, stand with your feet hip-width apart for balance, and keep the shovel close to your body. Also, don't pick up too much snow at once. Consider using a smaller shovel or filling a larger shovel no more than halfway.



BEWARE OF SHOULDER STRAIN

Shoveling snow can place a lot of strain on your shoulders. Lifting and throwing heavy piles of snow or hitting hard ice hidden beneath the snow can result in shoulder damage. Lifting too much snow can aggravate arthritis or further injure a worn rotator cuff.



LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

This is the No. 1 snow shoveling tip. If something doesn't feel normal or you're tired, it's time to stop. Go inside, warm up, rest and drink water, tea, or coffee. Reevaluate how your body feels before picking up where you left off.



BE CAREFUL AROUND MACHINERY

If you use a snowblower or plow, be especially cautious around moving parts and sharp edges. Be sure the equipment is turned off before clearing any snow jams. Keep children and pets away while you're operating machinery.



HAVE YOUR PHONE HANDY

If you're experiencing an emergency, call 911 immediately.

FROSTBITE & HYPOTHERMIA

Frostbite causes loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes.

Signs: Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin.

Actions: Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad.

Hypothermia is an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency.

Signs: Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech or drowsiness.

Actions: Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.

WHO'S AT RISK?



Older adults without proper food, clothing, or heating



People who stay outdoors for long periods



People who drink alcohol in excess or use illicit drugs



Babies sleeping in cold rooms



TAKE PRECAUTIONS OUTDOORS

Wear appropriate outdoor clothing: wear a tightly woven, preferably wind-resistant coat or jacket; inner layers of light, warm clothing; mittens; hats; scarves; and waterproof boots.

PUT A FREEZE ON WINTER FIRES

Home fires occur more in the winter than any other season. Stay warm and cozy and be fire smart!



Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.



Heating equipment is involved in **1 in every 6** home fires and **1 in every 5** home fire deaths.



Keep anything that can burn **at least 3 feet** from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters.



Keep portable generators **outside, away from windows, and as far away** from your home as possible.



Install and test carbon monoxide alarms **at least once a month**.



Plug only **1 heat-producing appliance** (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.



Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents **every year**.



Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container, and keep it **outside at least 10 feet** from your home and any nearby buildings.

For more information on how to prevent winter fires, visit usfa.fema.gov/winter and nfpa.org/winter.

WINTER FREEZE CHECKLIST

- ☐ Our **furnace has been inspected and serviced** by a qualified professional during the last 12 months. *(A furnace should be serviced at least once a year.)*
- ☐ Our **chimneys and vents have been cleaned and inspected** by a qualified professional. I have checked for creosote built-up. *(Not cleaning your chimney is the leading cause of chimney fires from built up creosote. This service needs to be done at least once a year.)*
- ☐ Our wood for our fireplace or wood stove is **dry, seasoned wood**.
- ☐ Our **fireplace screen is metal or heat-tempered glass**, in good condition and secure in its position in front of the fireplace.
- ☐ We have a **covered metal container** ready to use to dispose cooled ashes. *(The ash container should be kept at least 10 feet from the home and any nearby buildings.)*
- ☐ Our children know to stay at least **3 feet away** from the fireplace, wood/pellet stove, oil stove or other space heaters.
- ☐ Our portable space heaters have an **automatic shut-off**.
- ☐ Our portable space heaters will be **plugged directly into an outlet** *(not an extension cord)* and placed at least three feet from anything that can burn; like bedding, paper, walls, and even people. *(Place notes throughout your home to remind you to turn off portable heaters when you leave a room or go to bed.)*
- ☐ We have **tested our smoke alarms** and made sure they are working. *(You need smoke alarms on every level of the home, inside each sleeping room and outside each separate sleeping area. For the best protection, the smoke alarms should be interconnected so when one sounds, they all sound.)*
- ☐ We have **tested our carbon monoxide alarms** and made sure they are working. *(Carbon monoxide alarms should be located outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.)*



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169



**Royal Oak
FIRE DEPT**

PROTECT YOUR PIPES

Prepare your plumbing for winter with these essential tips. From insulating pipes to maintaining adequate heating, these measures will safeguard against freezing temperatures and potential damage. Follow these recommendations to keep your plumbing resilient and your home protected during the coldest months.

Insulate Exposed Pipes: Wrap pipes in insulation or use pipe sleeves to shield them from the cold. Focus on exposed pipes in attics, basements, and crawl spaces, as these are particularly vulnerable to freezing temperatures.

Seal Gaps and Cracks: Identify and seal any gaps or cracks in your home's exterior walls and foundation. This helps prevent cold air from infiltrating and affecting the temperature of the pipes inside.

Drip Faucets: Allow faucets connected to vulnerable pipes to drip slowly during extremely cold nights. This continuous flow can prevent the pipes from freezing by relieving pressure in the system.

Maintain Adequate Heating: Keep your home well-heated, especially in areas where plumbing is located. Insulate spaces like attics and crawl spaces, and consider leaving cabinet doors open to allow warm air to reach pipes under sinks.

Disconnect and Drain Outdoor Hoses: Before winter hits, disconnect and drain water from outdoor hoses. If possible, shut off the outdoor water supply and store hoses in a warmer place. This prevents water from freezing inside the hoses and causing damage to both the hoses and the connected indoor pipes.

Check your water meter periodically to see if there is damage, and call DPS at 248-246-3300 if you detect a crack.

Your water meter is located indoors, commonly in a basement, crawl space, or utility closet. Typically, indoor meters are located where the water line enters the structure.



PET WINTER SAFETY

The following tips are provided by The Humane Society of the United States:

- Keep your pets inside with you and your family. Under no circumstances should pet cats be left outdoors, even if they roam outside during other seasons. Dogs are happiest when taken out frequently for walks and exercise, but kept inside the rest of the time. Don't leave pets outdoors when the temperature drops.
- If your dog is outdoors much of the day for any reason, they must be protected by a dry, draft-free shelter that is large enough to allow them to move comfortably, but small enough to hold in body heat. The floor should be raised a few inches from the ground and covered with cedar shavings or straw. The doorway should be covered with waterproof burlap or heavy plastic.
- Pets who spend a lot of time outdoors need more food in the winter. Keeping warm depletes energy. Routinely check your pet's water dish to make certain the water is fresh and unfrozen. Use plastic food and water bowls; when the temperature is low, your pet's tongue can stick and freeze to metal.
- No matter what the temperature is, windchill can threaten a pet's life. Exposed skin on noses, ears, and paw pads are at risk for frostbite and hypothermia during extreme cold snaps. Short-haired dogs often feel more comfortable wearing a sweater—even during short walks.
- Rock salt and other chemicals used to melt ice can irritate the pads of your pet's feet. Wipe all paws with a damp towel before your pet licks them and rubs their mouth.



City of Royal Oak

203 S Troy Street, Royal Oak 48067

HOURS

8 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday - Thursday

8 AM - 12 PM, Friday

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

44th District Court: 248-246-3600

Animal Shelter: 248-548-3058

City Clerk: 248-246-3050

City Hall: 248-246-3000

Code Enforcement: 248-246-3210

Community Development: 248-246-3280

Downtown Manager: 248-246-3286

Farmers Market: 248-246-3276

Fire Department: 248-246-3800

Library: 248-246-3700

Mayor/Commission: 248-246-3200

Police Department: 248-246-3500

Public Services: 248-246-3300

Senior Services: 248-246-3911



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