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Important Dates:

February 6
9:00am Board Meeting

February 20
9:00am Board Meeting

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday
7:30am – 4:00pm

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Winter Maintenance Costs

Winter maintenance activities include applying salt and sand, as well as plowing snow on roads and shoulders.

During a typical year, the Road Commission will respond to approximately 50 winter maintenance callouts, and will use about 20,000 to 25,000 tons of salt, and 14,000 to 18,000 tons of sand.

The cost of winter maintenance can easily be \$2-\$3 million annually, depending upon the number of inclement weather occurrences and the duration of the winter months.

This year, the Road Commission has been very busy in providing winter maintenance services.

As of January 10th, operating costs are already over 70% of total budgeted costs for the entire 2013/2014 winter season.

Shown below is the winter maintenance breakdown of costs for both the primary and local road system that includes all materials, equipment, and labor expenses.

	Actual Winter Maintenance Costs/Season				BUDGET	TO DATE
	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	01/10/2014
Primary Road	\$970,125	\$1,379,521	\$797,772	\$1,318,376	\$1,200,000	\$873,951
Local Road	\$1,227,839	\$1,580,524	\$693,258	\$1,266,261	\$1,400,000	\$982,194

Winter Maintenance Facts

- The Road Commission performs winter maintenance operations out of four garages located in Coopersville, Grand Haven Township, Hudsonville, and Holland Township.
- The Road Commission deploys a fleet of up to 62 snowplows, ready twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week during the winter.
- The cost of salt has increased almost 200% in the past ten years from \$25.59/ton in 2003 to \$48.28/ton today.
- A 60% salt to 40% sand mixture is utilized to provide the most cost effective yet service orientated practice for winter maintenance.
- Anti-icing materials are sometimes applied to the road up to 48 hours before a winter storm to prevent a bond from forming between the pavement and the snow and ice when the storm starts.
- A single snowplow can average up to 12 tons of salt/sand mixture use per day.
- As temperatures fall to 10-20°F, the action of salt (which lowers the freezing temperature of water) takes longer to work.
- A heavy snow storm can cost more than \$400,000 to clear, including the cost of salt, sand, vehicle operation/maintenance, and wages.
- A typical snow storm can take up to 3 days to clean up and clear all roads.

Winter Service Levels

Did you know? Postal Service regulations stipulate that snow removal in front of a mailbox is the owner's responsibility. While Road Commission crews make every effort to clear shoulders of snow as soon as possible, our first priority is opening up all roads to traffic.

Due to the stagnant levels of transportation revenues, along with rapidly rising costs, the Road Commission made difficult but responsible changes to the level of service for winter maintenance operations a few years ago.

A policy was developed to provide cost effective winter maintenance operations and to inform the public about the level

of winter maintenance services for roadways maintained by the Road Commission.

Winter maintenance operations are conducted in accordance with the established priority system based on traffic volumes, road classification, and location.

The priorities also facilitate emergency responders and are as follows:

- 1 – State Trunklines
- 2 – Multi-lane Primary Roads
- 3 – Primary Roads
- 4 – Local Paved Roads
- 5 – Subdivision Streets
- 6 – Local Gravel Roads
- 7 – Dead End Streets and Cul-de-sacs



Safe Roads for Everyone

Is it legal to pass a snowplow?

There are no state laws that prohibit passing a snowplow. However, the action of passing can be extremely dangerous because pavement conditions vary across the path taken to pass.

Snowplows may be equipped with wing plow blades that can extend anywhere between 2 and

10 feet beyond the width of the truck. This wing plow blade is often not seen because of the snow cloud being kicked up by the snowplow. These wing plows can often weigh as much as a compact car.

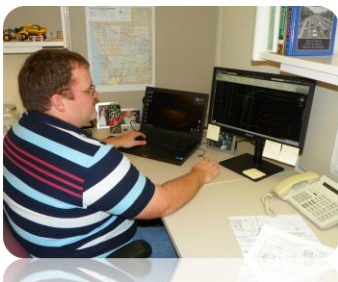
Don't crowd the plow!

Road Commission drivers are specially trained to drive salt trucks and snowplows. But the drivers need your help

when it comes to maneuvering their large trucks along roadways or through traffic. Please give Road Commission drivers plenty of room to do their job.

Safety First

Exercise extreme caution during inclement weather. If you must drive, carefully monitor weather advisories, give fellow drivers extra room and slow down.



Shown above is Heath Brinker, a State of Michigan licensed engineer, working on a road improvement design.

Continuing Education for Engineers

On October 10, 2013, new legislative rules took effect requiring Professional Engineers to complete continuing education as a condition for license renewal.

The first time continuing education will be required

with be for licenses expiring on Oct. 31, 2015.

The Road Commission currently has on staff 8 Professional Engineers registered in the State of Michigan.

In order to maintain the

state license, these engineers will annually participate in qualifying continuing education activities that will maintain, improve, or expand the skills and knowledge relevant to the area of engineering for the Road Commission.