



The Road Newsletter, Volume 8, Issue 1

January 2018

How Can You Help the Keep Your Roads Clear in Winter?

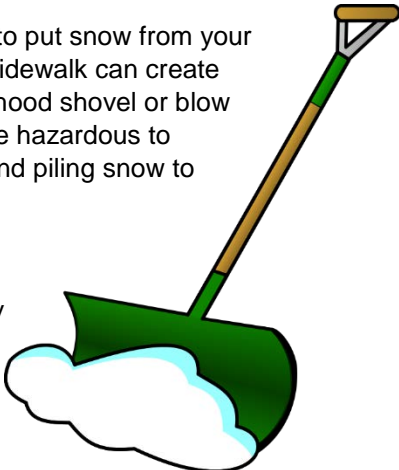
The Road Commission has the responsibility to make sure its roads are safe and clear for travel. In the winter, this means plowing and treating the roads for ice and snow. When winter hits hard in West Michigan, it can affect us all, and there are some things that the residents can do in their own neighborhoods to help in keeping the roads safe and clear:

1. When clearing your driveway, never push the snow on to the road.

It's not the neighborly thing to do, and under Michigan law, it is illegal to put snow from your property out into the road. Pushing snow into the road from your driveway or sidewalk can create dangerous conditions for people driving by. If enough people in your neighborhood shovel or blow their snow into a plowed road, then it can make your neighborhood roads more hazardous to drive. Help us keep the roads and neighborhoods clear and safe by clearing and piling snow to the right of your driveway, and make sure it's off the road.

2. Make sure you keep your trash can clear of the road.

Keep in mind that when Road Commission trucks are out plowing they are pushing up a lot of snow. Often, it's difficult to see objects that are directly on the side of the road. So, to help snow plow and other drivers, and to keep your trash can from getting knocked over, it's best to make sure it's set off the road. The best plan is to shovel a spot for it next to your driveway and leave plenty of room between it and the road to help avoid it being hit.



3. Keep items, such as portable basketball hoops, off the road and road shoulder.

To ensure that our trucks can properly clear the road, make sure that you don't have items in the road or directly on the road shoulder that could interfere with plowing. Oftentimes, things are left on the road after the first snow, from small things like bikes and sleds to large things like basketball hoops. To help avoid damage to your property and to allow us to safely plow the roads, make sure that these items are cleaned up and off the road.

If we all work together during winter, then we can help make sure the roads in Ottawa County stay as clear and safe as possible.



New Finance Director at the Road Commission

We would like to welcome our new Finance Director, Amy Fairchild, to the Ottawa County Road Commission. Amy joined the Accounting Department two years ago and she will be taking over the position after the retirement of Mike Mikita.

Mike has been a familiar face at the Road Commission since he started working here in 1978, forty years ago. He took over the position of Finance Director over 30 years ago, and has been serving in that position ever since.

The Finance Director is a vital role to the Road Commission and we are grateful for the many years Mike Mikita has put in here

and all the work he has done for the Road Commission. We are thrilled to welcome Amy as Finance Director and we're excited to see what she brings to the position.

American Galvanizers Association Highlights Historic Local Bridge

This past August the Road Commission got the chance to work with the American Galvanizers Association (AGA) in highlighting a significant bridge here in Ottawa County. The Bridge over Stearns Bayou, also known as the Green Street Bridge, is a significant historic bridge, not just here in Ottawa County, but across the industry. The reason AGA took an interest in the bridge is that the Stearns Bayou Bridge is the first galvanized bridge to be built in the US.

Built in 1966, the galvanizing on the bridge has stood the test of time and the AGA hopes to use it as an example of the longevity and sustainability of galvanized bridges. As part of their visit, representatives from the AGA took some readings and samples, as well as conducted an interview with Brandt Homik from the Road Commission's Engineering Department.

You can find the video about the bridge [HERE](#). They are also expecting an upcoming article in *Roads and Bridges Magazine*.



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Important Dates

Monday – January 1, 2018, Closed for Christmas Holiday

Thursday – January 4, 2018 | 9AM | Board Meeting

Thursday – January 18, 2018 | 9AM | Board Meeting



14110 Lakeshore Drive
PO Box 739
Grand Haven, Michigan 49417
616-842-5400
Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 7:30AM-4PM

The Ottawa County Road Commissioners: Tom Bird | Tom Elhart | Betty Gajewski | Tim
Grifhorst | Jim Miedema
Managing Director: Brett Laughlin

Who manages the roads and how are they funded? The Ottawa County Road Commission manages the roads--not the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners or County staff. The Ottawa County Road Commission is primarily funded by fuel taxes and vehicle registrations. Concerns about roads should be directed to the Ottawa County Road Commission.