



Winter Road Operations

Washington County coordinates winter road operations with ODOT, neighboring county road departments, and municipal public works agencies through the [Cooperative Public Agencies of Washington County](#), providing mutual support and response.

Priorities

Washington County is committed to planning, building and maintaining a great transportation system, ensuring the safety of all roadway users, and to operating the County roadway system in a cost-effective and environmentally responsible manner.

Washington County maintains about 1,300 miles of roadway, from urban arterials carrying over 40,000 vehicles per day to dead-end gravel roads carrying fewer than ten. The County does not have sufficient operational resources to inspect all roadways for weather-related hazards either during, after, or in anticipation of a storm, and may not have resources to immediately correct all known hazardous conditions.

To make the best use of resources, we identify **priority routes** that provide access to critical facilities, emergency services and major highways. These priority routes are the focus of our response to a winter storm event or emergency. (See [Snow Plow Route Map](#) and [Ice Control Route Map](#))

Roadways identified as emergency transportation routes receive attention first. Afterwards, the remaining arterial and collector routes will be serviced. Residential and local access roads are serviced on an as-needed basis only after all arterial and collector routes have been cleared.

Response

Weather forecasts issued by the [National Weather Service](#) or other reporting agencies are considered to determine an appropriate response to a storm or other emergency event.

If an event develops during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.), the Operations Supervisors dispatch personnel and equipment as needed, under direction of the Operations Superintendent. If an event develops outside regular business hours, the on-call Operations Supervisor has responsibility for calling in on-call personnel and dispatching equipment. The Operations Supervisor has discretion to consider special circumstances, prudent use of public resources, and apparent degree of potential hazard in making special exceptions to plans and guidelines. During extended events, Road Operations may operate on a 24-hour basis.

Flooding

Department of Land Use & Transportation
Operations and Maintenance
1400 SW Walnut Street, MS 51, Hillsboro, OR 97123-5625
phone: 503-846-7623 • fax: 503-846-7620
www.co.washington.or.us/lut • lutops@co.washington.or.us

High water warning signs are posted when water covers part of a traffic lane, but the hazard can be avoided without creating a danger to traffic. **Road closure** barricades are set up when traffic lanes in one direction are covered with water or when water is flowing across the roadway creating dangerous driving conditions.

Ice and Snow

When icy conditions are forecast, **anti-icing** materials may be applied in areas that have been identified as being problematic to minimize slippery conditions. Anti-icing agents are typically applied prior to inclement weather. Road surface, humidity, air temperature, moisture, weather and multiple other factors are considered prior to anti-icing application.

Non-toxic chemical **anti-icing** agents approved by the Pacific Northwest Snow-Fighters, including Magnesium Chloride (MGC), effectively help to prevent ice from forming and sticking to the road surface and may reduce the need for sanding.

When ice or snow cause roads to be slippery, roads may be **sanded** to improve traction. A clean, finely graded crushed aggregate, or **anti-skid** material, is mechanically spread at intersections, curves, on hills and other problem areas, at the discretion of the equipment operator. Sanding does not melt ice or snow. (See [Ice Control Route Map](#).)

Snow plows are not dispatched until after snowfall has stopped or until about three inches of snow has accumulated. Snow plows are usually kept off of priority routes during peak traffic hours to avoid congestion and visibility problems. (See [Snow Plow Route Map](#).)

Road closure barricades are set up when roadway conditions are extremely hazardous.

Best Management Practices

The application of anti-icing and anti-skid materials is guided by Washington County's adopted [Best Management Practices](#). Applications are made at the appropriate, minimal, rates consistent with environmental, meteorological and roadway traffic conditions. Equipment is properly calibrated and maintained to ensure proper application rates.

**Department of Land Use & Transportation
Operations and Maintenance**

1400 SW Walnut Street, MS 51, Hillsboro, OR 97123-5625
phone: 503-846-7623 • fax: 503-846-7620
www.co.washington.or.us/lut • lutops@co.washington.or.us