Chelan County Snow FAQs

Winter Driving Conditions

Chelan County winters can be challenging for motorists. They are equally challenging for the Public Works Road crews responsible for snow and ice control on our local roadways.

Weather conditions can be variable and unpredictable, placing extra demands on your vehicle and driving skills. Take the time to ensure you are well prepared for winter roads and always adjust your driving speed to existing conditions. **To find out about weather conditions where you are traveling, please visit NOAA.gov and the Washington State Department of Transportation's Mountain Passes website.**

Snow Removal

During the winter, Chelan County relies on its citizens to be helpful and responsible in removing snow and ice from public sidewalks (including walks and ramps leading to crosswalks), in order to provide its citizens with safe use of public sidewalks. Resolution 2015-04 requires that each owner of real property zoned or used for commercial use shall be responsible, within 24 hours of snow or ice falling or accumulating, to remove snow and ice from the full width of the sidewalk or sidewalks within the County right-of-way adjacent to the owner's property.

The County uses **snow plowing** as well as **solid & liquid de-icing chemicals** for snow and ice control. **Liquid anti-icer** is used before storm events to prevent frost and ice from forming and bonding to the roadway. **Solid de-icer chemicals**, which look like and are applied like sand, are used during and after snow events to keep accumulating snow loose and plowable so our plows can remove it. After storm events, **solid de-icer** is used to break-up compact snow & ice that has bonded to the roadway so it can be plowed off.

Snow Plowing

Throughout the winter, maintenance crews monitor weather and road conditions seven days a week, however, crews are not plowing "24/7". Unless contacted by emergency responders or the sheriff's department, crews do not plow or sand at night. Chelan County makes every effort to maintain access during the winter, but it is not possible to plow all roadways during every storm event (see Code of the West).

Snow and ice control efforts are prioritized to assure vital access throughout the County:

- Level One: School bus routes and major arterials,
- Level Two: Local Access roads,
- Level Three: Primitive roads.

Our snow plows are unable to remove all the snow from the road in one pass. The first pass through by a plow is intended to open up the road. The second pass, which occurs after all priority roads are first opened, will widen the plowed area and clear out cul-de-sacs. ***Keeping the road clear of obstructions (*such as parked vehicles and garbage cans*) allows for more effective and efficient snow removal.***

Please do not plow snow from driveways and private property onto county roads, as it can create a hazard for other motorists and plow drivers. Plowed snow from private property that encroaches on the roadway or impedes the ability of road crews to maintain the county road is illegal (RCW 9.66.010) and may result in citations/fines being issued.