



SNOW CLEARING BEST PRACTICES

COMMON ISSUES AND BEST PRACTICES TO INCLUDE IN YOUR NEXT SNOW VENDOR CONTRACT (December 2024)

Property Preparations

- Require a fall “walk around” with the vendor to discuss potential problem spots, point out required clearing areas (i.e. mailboxes, guest parking lots) to familiarize vendor of sensitive property areas
- Establish pre-storm communications requirements for residents
- Require curb flags or other markers to identify street boundaries and minimize damage prior to snow season
- Require salt barrels or access to salt supplies for residents’ use prior to snowfalls
- Require access to salt and/or sand around mailbox areas to reduce icing and improve traction

Equipment

- Specify the type of snow removal equipment to ensure that the vendor’s equipment is large enough and powerful enough for efficient clear snowing results (e.g. mini front loaders versus skid loaders)
- Consider requiring Polyurethane blades rather than steel blades to minimize damage to surfaces like driveways and aprons
- Watch for excessive fuel surcharging in contracts

Snow Clearing Events

- Negotiate a “snow cap” total that is above seasonal norms. Anything over the snow cap is considered beyond contract scope and can have a different negotiated price
- Clearly identify “trigger” snow events that require plowing; this is most often 1.5 inches
- Include snow drift removal that requires vendor to remove snow drifting from garage areas, streets and driveways
- Specify “open up” events, whereby the vendor must clear an 8–10-foot path down streets (if applicable) and one pass down driveways in snow events above a certain amount (e.g. 4 inches)
- Specify that the vendor must return every 3-4 inches of snowfall in a continuous snowfall event
- Ensure that vendor cleans bottom of driveways after any city plowing is complete
- Require that fire hydrants are hand shoveled at least two feet from hydrant base
- Require that mailboxes are properly cleared to ensure delivery of mail by USPS
- Negotiate a separate “nuisance snow” price that allows boards to request that the vendor clear the property under the normal trigger amount

Street Salting

- Specify liquid salt use at 10 degrees Fahrenheit and above; require use of salt pellets below 10 degrees Fahrenheit for maximum effect

Ala Carte Pricing

- Recommend inclusion of ala carte pricing that can be engaged by the association and/or by residents for extra services like additional shoveling, snowbank removal, extra salting, roof raking