

# Severe Snow

How does a storm dropping a lot of snow in a short amount of time affect our snow response differently than an average storm? The City of Rawlins budgets, prepares and staffs for an average Rawlins winter, which involve multiple snowstorms averaging under 6" of snow throughout the winter. However, when more than 6" of snow falls in 24 hours or less, we consider this a severe snow storm.

## Emergencies

- For situations such as emergencies, injury, and illness, plows are dispatched with the first responders to provide passage to the residential areas where accessibility is a concern.
- The city may issue various alerts to help notify and protect our residents.
  - If a snow emergency is called, all #1 priority routes have a special "No Parking" ban to allow for better snow control. These routes are clearly marked with signs.
  - We may also issue a weather advisory to ask people to limit travel unless necessary and urgent.

## City Snow Removal

- Non-priority streets (map available at [www.rawlinswy.gov/snow](http://www.rawlinswy.gov/snow)) are plowed only if four inches or more of snow has accumulated once priority streets have been cleared. When these streets are plowed, our main priority is to keep roadways open. It is too costly and time-consuming for the City to clear plowed snow away from all driveways and vehicles, and is the resident's responsibility.
- Rawlins winds cause a larger than normal impact on drifting. It is common on some city streets for the snow to drift into the street overnight for days in a row causing personnel to clear the same streets repeatedly.
- The City's snow response includes snow plowing, followed by snow removal from priority routes. When a severe snow storm occurs, removal takes significantly longer than in a regular sized storm and may involve traffic diversion around removal equipment. Give snow removal personnel time and space to work.
- Additional staff and equipment are redirected to handle the snow situation, including staff from Public Works streets, utilities, water treatment, and administration divisions; Community Development, including landfill, recycling, and administration; and Parks & Recreation. These staff often work 12-hour shifts staggered throughout the day. Additional staff from the Police Department — Communications and Administrative Services are also called to answer phones when needed.
- The approx. 1000 feet of Harshman Street from north of the Rawlins Family Recreation Center to south of the Carbon County Higher Education Center will likely be closed as it drifts in quickly. Both facilities will remain accessible from the other direction. In consultation with Carbon County School District #1, this was identified as low-priority to allow more frequented roads to be cleared first. The City may also limit traffic, including road closures, as determined by the Police Department and Public Works Department.

## Citizen Responsibilities

- If a severe snow storm is predicted, please move vehicles off the street when possible. This allows easier passage for our equipment if/when plowing occurs.
- We encourage residents to report problem areas at [www.rawlinswy.org/concern](http://www.rawlinswy.org/concern), by calling Public Works at 307-328-4599 during regular hours, or by calling the Police Communications Center at 307-328-4530 after-hours, weekends or holidays. However, especially in a severe snow incident, our limited equipment and manpower will be prioritized based on the snow removal plan.
- Homeowners are responsible for maintaining access to their own utility equipment, such as water meters/curb stops. It is also important for homeowners to keep their own gas meters clear. According to Black Hills Energy, snow covered meters may operate incorrectly, potentially causing gas flow or carbon monoxide issues. More information is available at [www.blackhillsenergy.com/safety](http://www.blackhillsenergy.com/safety)
- It is not illegal for residents to clear snow in the roadways by their homes. However, it is illegal to plow snow into the streets or onto the property of another without permission. It is dangerous for you, City personnel, and traffic. It creates a hazardous condition by creating humps in the road, which make snow removal difficult and can cause vehicles to lose control. Please keep fire hydrants clear so that they are easily visible from the road.

Want more information about snow and the City's response? Please visit [www.rawlinswy.gov/snow](http://www.rawlinswy.gov/snow) or call 307-328-4500 ext. 1022.

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