

# WINTER CONTROL

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Does the Town of Renfrew have a Level of Service (LOS) Policy?

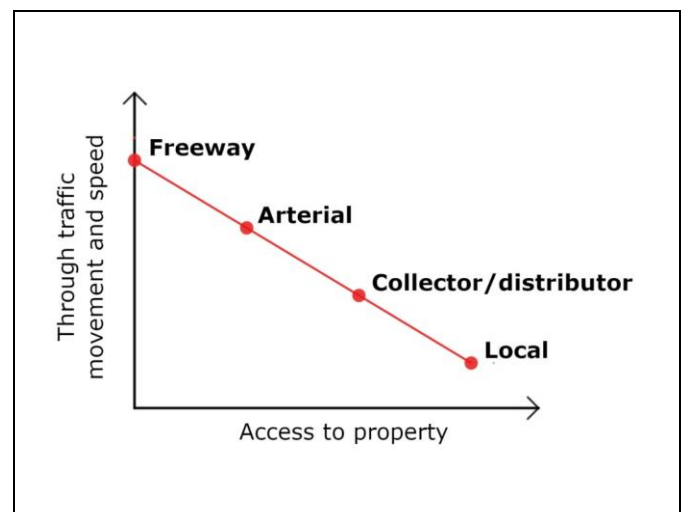
Yes, the Town of Renfrew adopted Ontario Regulation 239/02: Municipal Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways, as its Level of Service (LOS). This document outlines the minimum required level of service the municipality must meet; however, the Town typically exceeds the minimum standard unless undue circumstances arise, such as a significant (heavy or long duration) storm event.

Ontario Regulation 239/02 outlines the minimum standard for numerous maintenance requirements including, but not limited to, sidewalks, inspections, potholes, and street lights.

### Which roads are plowed first, and how is that decided?

The Town is generally plowed in four (4) quadrants. Within each quadrant, Class 1, 2 or 3 “arterial” roads are plowed first, followed by Class 4, 5 and 6 “collector” and “local” roads.

On occasion, due to significant (heavy or long duration) storm events, both manpower and/or equipment may require a reduced plow route, extending the time in which we are able to get all routes plowed as quickly as we would like.



## Are there winter parking restrictions?

Per By-law 42-2025, Section 14, Winter Parking Restrictions:

(1) No person shall park, or stand a vehicle or permit a vehicle to remain parked on any highway or in a municipal parking lot between the hours of 12:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. from **December 1** in any year to **March 31** of the following year, both dates inclusive.

(2) No person shall park or stand a vehicle or permit a vehicle to remain parked on any highway at any time when the highway is specially marked with signs indicating snow removal or when such person has received verbal or written notice from a representative of the Town indicating the prohibition of parking.

(3) This section shall be enforced by the By-law Enforcement Officer and/or the Director of Development and Works or his designate.

## Do plow operators have driving restrictions?

Yes, the Province of Ontario restricts drivers through Ontario Regulation 555/06: Hours of Service. The regulation states the number of hours an operator can consecutively drive, hours of rest required, and driving cycle.

The Hours of Service regulation is good for both the driver and travelling public as it reduces operator fatigue and the potential for accidents to occur. However, it limits the number of hours a driver can operate a plow, potentially limiting snow removal and clean-up following a winter storm.

## How are my concerns (complaints) handled?

When a resident contacts the Town with a concern regarding winter maintenance operations, the concern is recorded and forwarded to the appropriate department. During a storm event it is very difficult for operations staff to address the concern immediately as they are typically out during the storm event or off on rest time as dictated by legislation (i.e. Hours of Service Regulation). Your concern/complaint will be addressed as soon as possible and we appreciate your patience.

## When are sidewalks cleared of snow and ice?

Like the roads, the Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways, Ontario Regulation 239/02, sets the minimum standard for winter maintenance of sidewalks. Typically, both the roads and sidewalks are cleared at the same time.

Sidewalk tractors/plows will scrape most of the ice and snow off a sidewalk and apply salt (or a mix of salt & sand). It is important to understand that a sidewalk does not “bare off” like an asphalt roadway.

Not all sidewalks receive winter maintenance.

## When is salt and sand used on roads?

Salt is used to prevent ice from forming, or to melt existing ice and snow. It is spread on paved roads only, not gravel roads. Town trucks are fitted with electronic spreaders that disperse salt at the time and quantity depending upon the conditions in an effort to control salt usage.

Gravel roads are treated with a sand/salt mixture (~3% salt). A sand/salt mixture may be used on other roadways, intersections and/or sidewalks when the temperatures are sufficiently low that salt does not work.

Road salt can cause harm to the environment. Environment Canada requires the Town to review its Salt Management Plan annually and report accordingly, as a method of reducing salt in the environment.

## **Why does the plow drive down my road several times?**

The plow and wing can only plow approximately 14' wide. Depending on your street, the plow may need to travel down each side to clear the entire roadway, as well as ensure that the snow and ice are "winged back" sufficiently to provide future snow storage, site lines, and to uncover catchbasins to provide drainage for runoff during a thaw.

## **Why does the Town spread salt on the road and then come back later to plow it?**

Since the Town does not have the ability to pre-wet the streets with a salt brine, we improvise by salting the centre of the road. The first fall of snow wets the salt and allows it to spread over the roadway. Later, the plow can remove the snow and ice easier and "bare off" the road.

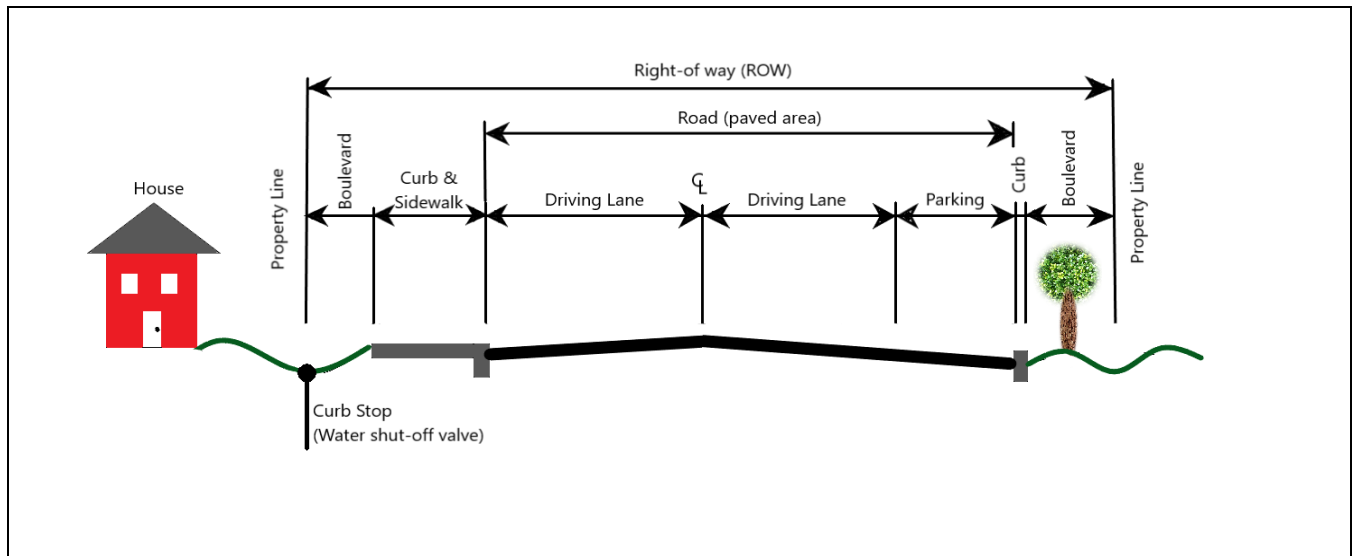
## **Where does my property line start?**

Most roadways within the Town of Renfrew have a 20 metre (66') right-of-way, although some major roads may have a wider right-of-way, and some minor or historical roadways may have a smaller width.

Within the right-of-way is the driving lanes, shoulders (parking lanes), curbs, sidewalks, boulevards, and utilities (hydro poles, streetlights, etc.).

The boulevard, or typically the grassed area between the edge of road or sidewalk to your property line is where snow is stored as it is plowed (winged back) off the roadway.

A simple way to locate your property line is to locate your property survey bars, which are often buried. Another way is to locate the "curb stop" also known as your water shut off valve. This is typically located on the property line.



## Does the Town come back to remove snow that plows have dumped in my driveway?

No, the Town does not remove snow from driveways or entrances. Owners and/or occupants of residential and business properties are responsible for keeping driveways clear down to the street. Because street plowing operations push snow from the road to the roadside, the driveway does fill with snow. Unfortunately, the municipality does not have the resources to come back to remove snow left by its plows at the end of the driveway.

## Does the Town offer snow removal services to seniors and individuals with disabilities?

Unfortunately, snow removal services for seniors and individuals with disabilities are not available from the municipality. You may be able to get assistance from a family member, friend or neighbour. There are also a number of private snow clearing firms, or non-profit organizations that provide this service.

## How come the plow damages my lawn, and when is it going to be repaired?

There are two factors for lawns being damaged as a result of plowing:

1. The plow operator may have difficulty finding the sidewalk or the edge of the road under a blanket of snow; or
2. If the ground is not frozen before the first snowfall.

Once the plows have been out a few times and the sidewalk units have cleared their respective sidewalk routes, further damage is minimal. Damaged lawns may not be discovered until the snow melts. The Town will return to repair the damage once the winter season is over and staff are available for this work. However, homeowners are

encouraged to repair plow damage since Town staff may not be able to attend the site until late May.

A homeowner is encouraged to contact the Town to get their name and address on a list in order for the work to be scheduled.

## Is it okay to push snow onto the roadway or to the boulevard area across the street?

The **Highway Traffic Act** states: No person shall deposit snow or ice on a roadway without permission in writing so to do from the Ministry or the road authority responsible for the maintenance of the road. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 181.

Residents are to keep snow from their driveway on their property.

## The snowbank at the corner is too high and I cannot see oncoming traffic. What can be done?

Every attempt is made to keep snowbanks at corners to a minimum. If you have special concerns, contact the Town of Renfrew at 613-432-4848. Your concern will be recorded and directed accordingly.

## What is a windrow and how or why is it created?

A windrow is a long low ridge (pile) of snow that typically is located along the edge of the roadway or the centre of the driving lanes. The amount of snowfall definitely impacts the size of the windrow. There are two reasons why windrows occur. First, the grader or plow piles the snow in a “windrow” in order for the blower to be able to blow the snow into a waiting truck to be hauled away to the snow dump.

The second occurrence is when the roadway is plowed to the edge of the sidewalk and the sidewalk is plowed to the edge of the road leaving a windrow adjacent to the curb infringing on parking lane or shoulder of the road. This snow is picked up as well, however depending on when the sidewalk is plowed and/or the roadway, it can remain for some time before pick-up occurs as pick-up is typically undertaken during the night or early morning following the end of a storm event.

## Where and when does the Town pick-up (remove) snow?

Typically, in designated areas, snow is picked up the night following the end of the snow event. This consists of creating a windrow of snow down the edge of the roadway. The loader/blower then blows the snow into trucks that will haul the snow away to the snow dump.

If the snow is too wet due to moisture content, or the temperatures become too warm, the blower is not able to pick-up the snow and blow it into the waiting trucks. The blower shoot becomes blocked and a “mess” of slushy snow and ice is typically left

behind on the street and sidewalk. Snow removal will be halted under these conditions and will commence once temperatures are cooler.

If a second or third winter storm event is anticipated back-to-back, pick-up will be placed on hold until the storm event has passed, and all roads and sidewalks meet the minimum standard. Snow pick-up may be further impacted if operators use all their “hours of service” and are mandated to rest.

The designated areas for snow pick-up/removal are the downtown core, extremely narrow streets, areas affected by site lines, and areas subject to flooding. Not all areas are equal based on geometry of the road, amount of snowfall, time of year, workforce availability, etc.

## **What safety measures should pedestrians and children at play consider?**

Plow trucks are very large and are built to push snow away from the roadway. If conditions are “sloppy”, ice and snow can splash back, knocking over pedestrians. Pedestrians that are walking in an area where snow is being plowed should ensure that they have stable footing and, if possible, move away from moving plows (i.e. back into a driveway).

Children playing in snowbanks along the edge of the road is very dangerous. Plow trucks are large and heavy and cannot stop instantaneously. Children sliding down snowbanks or building forts on/in the banks cannot be seen by the plow drivers. PLEASE keep your children safe.

## **Why do I get more snow in my driveway than my neighbour?**

There are several reasons why your driveway may get more snow than your neighbours such as:

- You are located adjacent to a curve on the road where the snow is carried around the curve and your driveway is the first to receive it,
- There is a large space between driveways vs. driveways that are close together (i.e. single-family home on a large lot vs. townhouse units’ side by side). If there are several driveways the snow is distributed throughout them, rather than all of the snow being deposited into one driveway. The snow “falls” into an open driveway, whereas it can’t fall into an existing snow bank.
- You are in an area that receives blowing snow (i.e. a field across from your home, wind tunnel),
- You pile your snow on the side of your driveway that the plow is travelling; therefore, the snow is carried across the front of your driveway.
- The south and west sides of the roadway typically get more sun during the day to melt snow and ice.

## **Why is the sidewalk machine out when there isn’t any snow falling?**

Despite there being no snow, the sidewalk machine may be out salting ice patches, particularly during spring like conditions. Thaw during the day runs across the sidewalk and freezes overnight. The blade may be dropped at times to remove ice chunks or loose ice patches.

## When does the Town declare a Significant Weather Event?

The Town of Renfrew adopted Ontario Regulation 239/02, Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways. The regulation provides for the municipality to declare a “Significant Weather Event” when the Town is not necessarily able to meet the minimum requirements of the regulation. The declaration permits the municipality to not meet the minimum requirements until such time as the declaration has been rescinded.

The standards subject to a Significant Weather Event are:

- Snow Accumulation on Roadways
- Snow Accumulation on Bicycle Lanes
- Icy Roadways
- Snow Accumulation of Sidewalks
- Icy Sidewalks

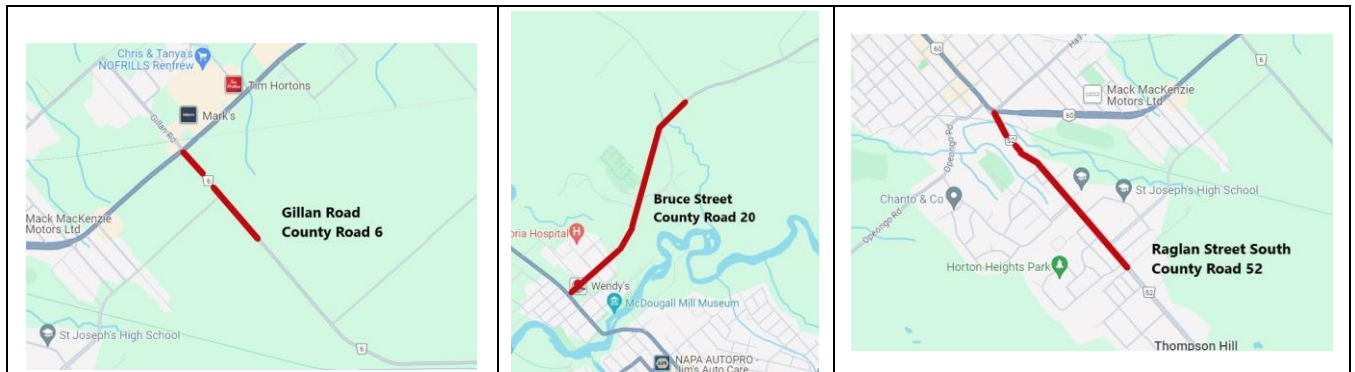
When the Town declares a Significant Weather Event, notification shall be posted on the municipality’s website, and by announcement of a social media platform, such as Facebook or Instagram.

## Which roads are County of Renfrew Roads?

There are three (3) County Roads that fall within the limits of the Town of Renfrew:

- County Road 6 (Gillan Rd.) – from O’Brien Rd. to Town Limit (Horton)
- County Road 20 (Bruce St.) – from Stewart St. to Cobus Rd.
- County Road 52 (Raglan St. S.) - from Veterans Memorial Blvd. to Graham Ave.

The Town of Renfrew maintains County Road 20 (Bruce Street) and County Road 52 (Raglan Street South) under a winter maintenance agreement with the County of Renfrew, however County Road 6 (Gillan Road) is maintained by the County of Renfrew.



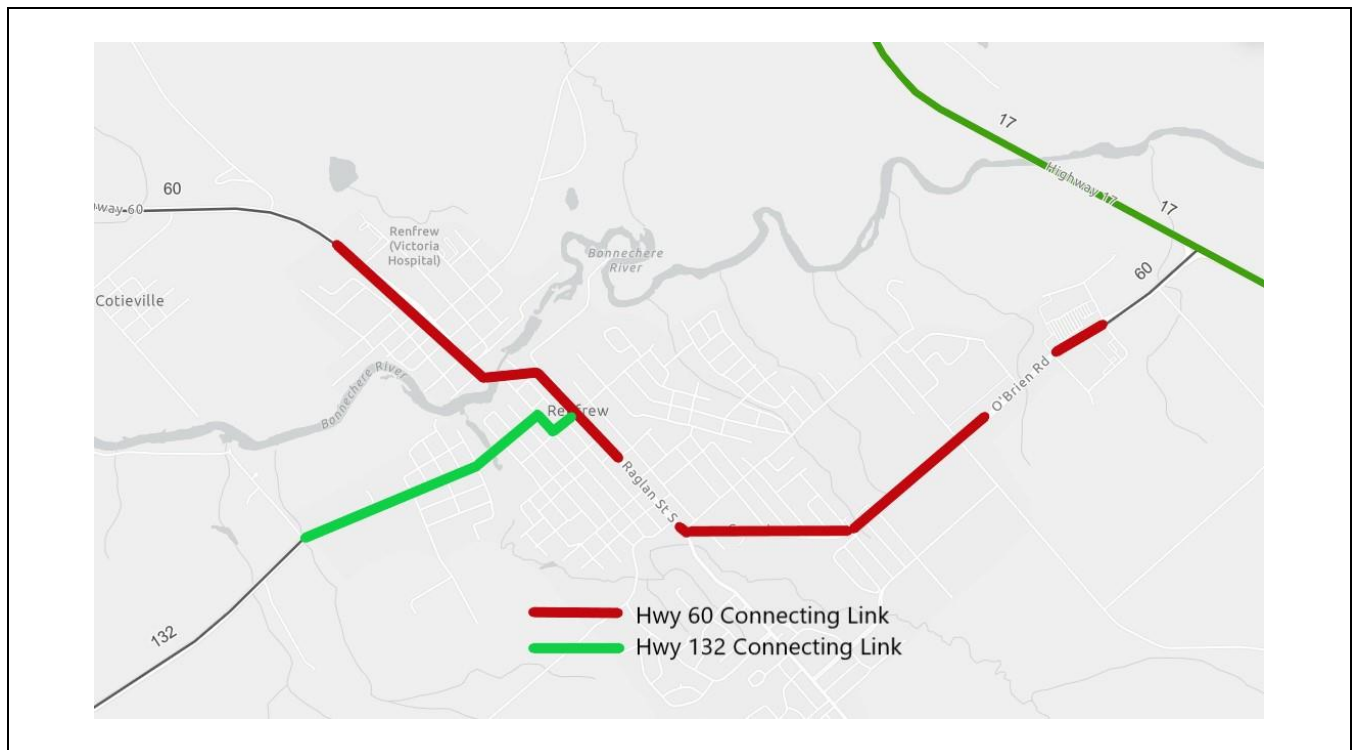


## Which roads are Provincial Roads?

There are three (3) Provincial highways within or abutting the Town of Renfrew:

- Provincial Hwy. 17 (Trans Canada Highway)
- Provincial Highway 60
- Provincial Highway 132

The Town owns the roadways connecting the Provincial Highways to one another. The Town roads are called “Connecting Links”. Provincial Highways are maintained by the Ministry of Transportation, while the “Connecting Link” roads are maintained by the Town of Renfrew.



## How can I help the Town?

### ***Be patient:***

In heavy snowfalls it takes longer to get all our streets and sidewalks cleared. This can also have a bearing on winter events that last a long time or occur over a few days.

### ***Be a good neighbour:***

Help those who may not be able to shovel their driveways or clear their walkways.



***Don't park on the street during a snowfall, or immediately following a snowfall:***

Parked cars are obstacles that slow down plowing operations. If you are in contravention of the Parking By-law 29-2012, Section 14, Winter Parking Restrictions, your vehicle may be ticketed or towed.

***Keep garbage cans and recycling bins back in your driveway:***

Garbage cans and recycling bins should be 5-6 feet from the road edge so that plows can efficiently clear roadways. Garbage cans and recycling bins should not be placed on top of the snowbank. Please keep garbage cans and recycling bins off the sidewalks.