

City of Charlotte
Emergency Plan for Ice Control and Snow Removal

Winter 2026 - 2027

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Headquarters

The Headquarters for the Ice Control and Snow Removal Program is the Street Maintenance Division Administrative Building located at 4411 Northpointe Industrial Blvd.

Press Releases & Media

Information will be released by the Director of Charlotte Communications & Marketing, or their designee. Street Maintenance management personnel are typically available for interviews during a snow event but the interviews should be coordinated through the City of Charlotte Communications & Marketing staff.

Weather Reports

When inclement weather is predicted for the Charlotte area, the Street Maintenance Division will compile weather reports from multiple sources before 2:00 pm the day prior to the storm. This information will be used to determine necessary preparations and adjustment of crew schedules as needed. Street Maintenance Division management will determine when to implement the Snow & Ice Program.

Crew Schedules

Activation of the Snow & Ice Control Program typically results in the modification of staff schedules to support the program goals. To provide appropriate coverage and maintain snow control efforts the division will transition to 24-hour operations consisting of two 12-hour shifts. These shifts may vary in start and end times but usually begin and end at 7:00AM or 7:00PM to reduce impacts on peak traffic.

Staffing

All field and management staff of the Street Maintenance Division are considered essential personnel. During snow and ice events essential personnel are assigned to either a day shift or night shift corresponding to a level of response. Personnel are expected to report as needed to cover their duties during specific shifts and events. A standard snow and ice event will have approximately 100 personnel assigned during each shift. Employees are notified via phone or text when to report for shifts and assignments.

Annual Preparation

Street Maintenance Division supervisory personnel, yard coordinators, and administrative staff will hold a meeting on or around October 1st of each year to discuss plans and responsibilities for the upcoming winter's ice control and snow removal program.

All Street Maintenance Personnel will participate in annual snow and ice training that typically occurs the last week of October. This training provides crews the ability to check snow equipment, ride snow routes and practice skills.

Storm Information and Debriefing

Within five days after the end of a storm condition, supervisory personnel and SMD administrative staff will hold a debriefing meeting to discuss any concerns, questions, or procedural changes stemming from the most recent condition.

Data related to the storm event including tons of salt used, hours worked, and specific challenges will be available in a draft After-Action report.

CDOT Snow and Ice Response

Pretreatment – Proactive treatment prior to a snow or ice event.

- Salt Brine
 - 167 bridges, 95 City and 72 State
 - 1,316 lane miles of roadways
 - 1,113 City lane miles
 - 203 State lane miles

Light – snow and/or ice exists on bridges, culverts, or isolated pavement areas.

- Condition A (9 routes focusing on bridges and culverts)
 - 289 bridges/culverts covered, 199 City and 90 State

Moderate – Accumulation of snow/ice on the streets.

- Condition B (16 routes)
 - All trucks and staff are activated and begin treatment of all routes

Severe – Excessive accumulation of snow/ice on the streets.

- Condition C (16 routes)
 - All trucks and staff are activated and begin treatment of all routes
 - May include activation of emergency contracted resources to assist in snow removal.

Routes

- Priority 1 – Major Thoroughfares, Arterials and Public Safety Resources
- Priority 2 – Minor Thoroughfares, Arterials and Major Bus Routes
- Priority 3 – Major and Minor collectors
- Priority 4 – Residential collectors
- Priority 5 – Neighborhood streets

Service Level Targets

- 90% of all major and minor thoroughfares cleared within 48 hours from the end of the storm.
- 80% of all residential collector streets made navigable within 48 hours from the end of the storm.
- 75% of all neighborhood streets made navigable within 72 hours from the end of the storm.

Central Business District

The Center City has unique elements, character and requirements during snow and ice removal efforts. Extra care and partnerships with other agencies are required to successfully maintain open access during winter weather events. Some of the areas that require special equipment and/or materials are listed below.

Tryon Street Mall

The boundary of the Tryon Street Mall area is defined as the streets enclosed by Morehead Street, College Street, Brookshire Freeway and Church Street. Sidewalks are cleared by Solid Waste Services and contractors as needed. Snow must be loaded onto trucks and removed from the mall area due to lack of roadway shoulders.

Levine Avenue of the Arts

Plowing of the pavers in this area must be done with rubber plow blades.

Gold Line Trolley

Special materials are used for melting snow and ice. Plows cannot be used on the tracks.

Snowplowing

The decision to plow City streets is based on the accumulation of snow and ice as well as the forecasted temperatures. Plowing too early may remove beneficial salt and can create more opportunities for moisture to re-freeze on the road surface. The Street Superintendent will make the determination to plow.

Violations

Snow should **NOT** be pushed from private businesses, parking lots, etc. onto City streets. CMPD will enforce this ordinance (Chapter 19, Article 1, Section 19-6 & 19-7).

Hazardous Condition Notification

Residents are encouraged to report hazardous conditions to the City's 311 system during normal business hours. Please dial 311 to report conditions that could result in collisions or property damage. After-hours during snow and ice events the Street Maintenance Division maintains dispatchers to direct emergency crews for hazardous conditions. Street Maintenance Dispatch can be reached at 704-336-3200.

Departmental Coordination

Solid Waste Services and Street Sweeping

After the ice and snow have melted and the streets have dried, Solid Waste Services will sweep the routes if needed.

CMPD Assistance

CMPD will furnish officers to direct traffic around crews loading snow in the CBD. They will enforce ordinances prohibiting the pushing of snow from parking lots and other private properties on to City streets.

CLT Water

In case of extreme snow accumulation CLT Water will furnish additional equipment with Operators

including a track-loader to be used at the designated Snow Disposal Site. This assistance will be provided on shifts that coincide with the SMD shifts.

Uptown Parking Restrictions

During snow removal operations, Park-It and CMPD will be requested to temporarily prohibit parking on the principle streets in the CBD area, so that snow can be plowed from curb lanes.

The following policies and procedures will be used:

The public will be notified through the news media that the peak hour "No Parking" regulations will be enforced in the Uptown area and that any cars already parked should be moved. CDOT will list specific routes where parking will be allowed. The "No Parking" requirement in "Tow-away" zones will be enforced during the hours that are posted. When parking will interfere with snow removal; Solid Waste Services will submit a request to have the parking meters bagged or change the message to read "Emergency - No Parking". If a vehicle is parked at a location after the meter has been bagged or the meter's message is changed to read "Emergency - No Parking", the vehicle will be towed away immediately. The charge for towing and recovery will be the responsibility of the owner.

Snow Disposal Area

City property on **4221 Westmont Drive** has been selected as the Snow Disposal Site. SMD will be responsible for unlocking/locking the gate. SMD will adhere to the best management practices to minimize pollution runoff in this area according to the guidelines provided by E&PM. CMU will operate their track loader at this location during extreme situations.

Tryon Street Mall Sidewalk Area

A walking path will be cleared for pedestrian traffic on the sidewalks in the Tryon Street Mall Area. Pedestrian areas around benches and shelters will also be cleared. Store owners will be responsible for clearing the walks from the front doors of their businesses to the walking path that has been cleared by Solid Waste Services.

An ice remover will be used to melt the ice and snow when the accumulation of snow is less than three inches in depth. When snow accumulation exceeds three inches, snow blowers, shovels, and hand labor will be used to clear the sidewalk area. If available, compact utility vehicles with appropriate attachments can be utilized to assist with clearing certain sidewalk areas.

The Tryon Street Mall sidewalk area has many underground vaults which are not sturdy enough to support heavy weight without causing possible damage to the vaults and concrete pavers. Therefore, hand labor will be utilized. Two known locations are the 100 & 300 blocks of S. Tryon Street. Snow removed in that manner will be placed in a windrow beside the cleared path or pushed to the street.

Snow/Ice Maintenance Responsibility

Streets within the City limits may be maintained by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) or the City of Charlotte. The map on the following page identifies priority streets on the City's snow program and roadways for which NCDOT would be responsible during a winter weather event.

Snow & Ice Responsibility

Map of Charlotte, NC, showing Snow & Ice Responsibility for various roads. The map is color-coded: black lines represent City Responsibility and red lines represent NCDOT Responsibility. Major highways like I-85, I-485, I-77, and US-21 are shown. Numerous local roads are labeled, including Wilkinson Blvd, Freedom Dr, West Blvd, and many others. A legend in the bottom right corner clarifies the color coding. A scale bar and north arrow are in the bottom left. The map is dated 8/26/2026 2:19 PM.

Legend:

- City Responsibility (Black line)
- NCDOT Responsibility (Red line)

Scale: 2.5 Miles

Charlotte DOT, 8/26/2026 2:19 PM