



## Town of Huntsville Staff Report

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2017      **To:** General Committee

**Author(s):** Stephen Hernen,  
Fire Chief/Director of Operations & Protective Services      **Confidential: No**

**Report Number:** OPS -2017-27-Winter Operations      **Subject:** Winter Operations

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### Report Highlights

- brief outline of past winter season and operations
- setting priorities for winter operations
- operational plan for 2017/18 winter operations

### Recommendation

**That:** Committee supports the proposed Winter Control Quality Standards Procedure as outlined in Report OPS-2017-27;

**And Further That:** Staff be authorized to make the necessary redistribution of expenses within the Division between salary wages and benefits, material and supplies and capital equipment to put this plan in place for the 2017/18 winter operation.

### Council Strategic Direction / Relevant Policies / Legislation / Resolutions

Strategic Plan 2017

Roads and Infrastructure Goal #2 Ensure Town's infrastructure and service levels respond to the needs of a prosperous and progressive community

Financial Management and Governance Goal #3 Ensure municipal operations are streamlined, efficient and effective

### **Background**

Winter Season 2016/17 – Huntsville received 2 ½ times the normal snow fall which caused over runs in budgeted staffing time, double the normal use of sand/salt, additional equipment costs for fuel and breakdowns and an increased need for snow removal from all sidewalks and road ways.

From November 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Public Works crews either plowed/sanded or sanded the roads a total of 84 times. The majority of this work (72 times) was performed between December and February.

Many complaints were received from the public about snow banks they couldn't see over, concerns with intersections and narrowing roadways due to snow banks.

### **Discussion**

It was obvious to all involved in winter operations that it is time to rethink the way we handle climate change and better prepare for winter season operations.

The following items were identified as ways to improve service levels:

- using plow/sander combination trucks to full potential
- providing coverage 24 hours per day 7 days per week
- Full utilization of staff within Division
- setting priorities for clearing roads and parking lots
- develop a snow removal/clearing policy

Past practice has been to call in all public works employees and contractors to complete the snow removal once the snow has either stopped or reached a depth that needs to be removed for safe travel. Once the routes have been completed; in most cases; the driver has reached their allowable hours, any additional clean up that is needed is done the next day. There is a night shift which would normally assist with this clean up and snow removal however; last year due in part to a shortage of operators most of these employees were moved to the main snow clearing crew.

We are proposing for this year that we continue with the practice of having a dedicated crew of employees and contractors for the main snow clearing operations.

Additionally; we would continue to utilize current seasonal employees to allow us to expand existing services and provide the following improvements:

- 24 hour coverage/ 7 days per week
- ability to respond to spot issues
- provide backup operators if needed on dedicated snow clearing crew
- perform snow removal duties during the night

One of the major changes we are proposing for this season is the full use of all staff within the Division by transferring the responsibilities of snow clearing on sidewalks and some municipal parking lots from contractors to full-time employees within the Division.

- Redirecting the previous full time Arena/Parks Attendant (due to a retirement) to a full time Parks/Cemeteries Attendant (no impact to budget)
- Redirecting some seasonal SWB within Parks and Cemeteries as well as utilizing savings by the elimination of some winter maintenance contract services and the use of existing equipment in the Division to create 2 full-time Parks/Cemeteries Attendants

The steps we have taken to prepare us for the winter season operations to date include:

- hiring a Yard/Fleet Administrator
- developing a snow clearing policy
- setting priorities
- developing a communication plan

Throughout the process of rethinking winter operations management was cognoscente of the letter of understanding between the Town and our unionized employees (IBEW 636) and have adjusted original thinking to make sure that we have met the goals of the agreed operational review. These goals included:

- ensuring that management and unions liability with respect to hours of work legislation is respected
- establishing a reasonable work-life balance for employees
- preventing employee burnout

- examining efficiencies

We feel that the proposed 2017/18 winter operational plan has in fact met all four of these goals.

### **Financial Implications**

#### Capital and Operational

To bring this plan into operation for the 2017/18 season it will require a redistribution of expenses within the Division between salary wages and benefits, material and supplies, contract services and capital equipment. There will be **no** increase to the overall winter control budget to accommodate these changes save and except expenses that would be incurred due to extreme weather conditions or mandatory legislative changes.

#### Attachments

Winter Control Quality Standards Procedure

#### Consultations

Julia McKenzie, Manager of Finance/Treasurer

Lisa Smith, Manager of Human Resources

Ross Fisher, Road Foreman

Bob Hall, Municipal Corridor Advisor

Joe Nicholls, Fleet/Yard Administrator

Colleen MacDonald, Manager of Parks and Cemeteries

**Respectfully Submitted:** SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

Stephen Hernen, Fire Chief/Director Operations/Protective Services

**CAO Approval:** SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

Denise Corry

Schedule "A"

**MUNICIPALITY OF  
TOWN OF  
HUNTSVILLE**

**WINTER CONTROL QUALITY  
PROCEDURES**



September 20, 2017  
Rev. No. 1



## **DISCLAIMER**

The Municipality of Town of Huntsville Winter Control Quality Standards Procedure is based on normal winter weather conditions, and the reliability and availability of both human and physical resources.

The Municipality of Town of Huntsville cannot guarantee a level of service under abnormal or extreme winter conditions and/or in the event of a work stoppage or equipment failure.

It is acknowledged that conditions may occur which may temporarily prevent achieving the service levels detailed herein. In such cases, efforts will be made to keep roads open and passable, consistent with available resources.

**MUNICIPALITY OF TOWN OF  
HUNTSVILLE WINTER CONTROL QUALITY  
STANDARDS**

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THE MUNICIPALITY OF TOWN OF  
HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC WORKS  
DEPARTMENT  
WINTER CONTROL QUALITY STANDARDS

**SECTION 1.0**      **PROCEDURE**

In consideration of the changing weather conditions that may be experienced during the winter season, the Public Works Department will strive to achieve the objectives and goals of the Winter Control Program as approved by Municipal Council, to deliver an efficient and effective winter maintenance program, while considering variables such as weather conditions and availability of manpower and equipment.

The goal will be to achieve the levels of service contained herein, and as a Minimum, the Municipality of Town of Huntsville will adhere to the Minimum Maintenance Standards (MMS) for Municipal Highways as prescribed by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation under O. Reg. 239/02, as amended from time to time.

**SECTION 2.0**      **OBJECTIVES**

- Deliver an efficient and effective Winter Maintenance Program and to meet the objectives as set out in this Procedure;
- Promote public safety and to reduce hazards to motorists and pedestrians that may be experienced as a result of changing winter weather conditions;
- Provide safe and passable transportation routes under changing winter storm conditions for emergency vehicles and the travelling public;
- Provide continued access to communities, businesses, industry and facilities.

**SECTION 3.0**      **DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this procedure, the following definitions apply:

**“as soon as practicable”** means without undue delay, having regard to prevailing circumstances, available resources, and budgeted funds;

**“cm”** means centimeters;

**“conditions”** defines the state in which the subject matter is found. The standard indicates the condition being measured.

**“day”** means a 24-hour period;

**“ice”** means all kinds of ice, however formed;

**“motor vehicle”** has the same meaning as in subsection 1 (1) of the Highway Traffic Act, except that it does not include a motor assisted bicycle;

**“non-paved surface”** means a surface that is not a paved surface;

**“paved surface”** means a surface with a wearing layer or layers of asphalt, concrete, or an asphalt emulsion surface treatment;

**“road”** refers specifically to the portion of road surface normally travelled on a roadway assumed by a roadway authority, but not including on-street parking or stopping zones.

**“roadway”** means the part of the highway that is improved, designed or ordinarily used for vehicular traffic, but does not include the shoulder, and, where a highway includes two or more separate roadways, the term “roadway” refers to any one roadway separately and not to all of the roadways collectively;

**“road class”** means a Class 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 road designated as such by posted speed and traffic volume in accordance with O. Reg. 239/02, as may be amended from time to time;

**“Minimum Maintenance Standard”** means Ontario Regulation 239/02, Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways.

**“operations”** means those activities the Public Works Department performs to improve a condition or sustain a road standard. Operations are normally defined by guidelines (not procedure), with discretion of the Director of Public Works or designate to choose various methods to achieve results cost-effectively.

**“salt”** means 100% crushed salt and/or salt treated with an additive designed to improve its effectiveness for winter control operations.

**“sand”** means a fine aggregate intended for application to roads during winter conditions to improve frictional properties of the road surface.

**“snow accumulation”** means the natural accumulation of any of the following that, alone or together, covers more than half a lane width of a roadway:

1. Newly-fallen snow.
2. Wind-blown snow.
3. Slush;

**“substantial probability”** means a significant likelihood considerably in excess of 51 per cent;

**“surface”** means the top of a roadway or shoulder;

“weather” means air temperature, wind and precipitation. O. Reg. 239/02, s. 1 (1); O. Reg. 23/10, s. 1 (1); O. Reg. 47/13, s. 1.

**SECTION 4.0 WINTER SEASON DEFINED**

For the purpose of the Municipality of Town of Huntsville - Winter Control Quality Standard, winter is that period from November 1st to and including April 15th of the calendar year.

**SECTION 5.0 WEATHER MONITORING**

From October 1st to April 30th, the Public Works Department will monitor weather conditions, both current and forecast to occur in the next 24 hours, three times per calendar day.

**SECTION 6.0 WINTER ROAD PATROL**

For the purpose of Winter Road Patrol, winter is that period from November 15th to and including April 15th of the calendar year.

During normal winter weather conditions, daily winter road patrols will be conducted along traffic corridors that are representative of the Municipality's roads. Reports (Appendix A) on road conditions will be completed for the duration of the winter season, every day of the week.

In the event there is a substantial probability of snow accumulation on roadways, ice formation on roadways or icy roadways, road patrol staff and/or staff working on call duties shall inspect road conditions as required and shall complete reports in relation to this standard. Staff shall use judgement and discretion in determining resources required to address road conditions for the purpose of calling out winter maintenance staff and equipment.

**SECTION 7.0 HOURS OF WORK**

**SECTION 7.1 Hours of Winter Maintenance Operations**

Equipment will not normally be deployed between the hours of 8:00 pm to 4:00 am, except for that of the Night Patrolman (1) which hours of operation are 8:00 pm to 4:00 am 7 days a week from November 15 to and including April 15 and snow removal crews as required or needed.

**SECTION 7.2 Winter Night Patrol**

During normal winter weather conditions, the Winter Night Patrol Person (1) will conduct at least one daily winter road patrol along traffic corridors that are representative of the Municipality's roads and a report on road conditions will be completed for the duration of the winter season, every day of the week.

During winter storm events the Night Patrol Person shall conduct winter maintenance operations and provide further assistance within the confines of the Winter Maintenance Night Patrol duties. A second Night Patrol Person may be deployed at the discretion of the Director of Public works or designate subject to availability and conformance with hours of work Legislation.

**SECTION 7.3            Stoppage of work**

The Municipality of Town of Huntsville adheres to all Hours of Service Legislations, and only allows employees to work in accordance with this legislation unless an employee must work due to an emergency. Working hours shall be in accordance with the Highway Traffic Act (O. Reg. 555/06) Hours of Service Legislation.

All or aspects of winter control activities may be suspended on some or all of the roads at the discretion of the Director of Public Works or designate, when it is deemed to be unsafe for the staff and the equipment to be on the road due to weather conditions such as, but not limited to, visibility impairments, drifting snow, freezing rain or ice conditions.

Winter control operations may also be suspended in local areas when vehicles or other obstructions make winter control operations ineffective or difficult.

If winter control operations are suspended, roads may be temporarily closed to vehicular traffic at the discretion of the Director of Public Works or designate.

**SECTION 8.0            WINTER CONTROL OPERATIONS-LEVEL OF SERVICE**

**SECTION 8.1            Snow Clearing**

As a minimum, the Municipality of Town of Huntsville procedure for snow clearing is to deploy resources as soon as practicable to clear snow accumulations after becoming aware that the snow accumulation is greater than the depths set out in Table 8.1 and to ensure that the accumulation of snow is maintained at levels less than or equal to the maximum depths specified within the time frames indicated in this procedure for the duration of the storm. During the storm, the objective will be to maintain one through lane in each direction.

Subject to observed conditions and/or forecasted weather conditions, resources may be deployed prior to reaching the accumulation depths set out in Table 8.1 in an effort to ensure that the accumulation of snow is maintained at levels less than or equal to the maximum depths specified within the time frames indicated in this procedure for the duration of the storm.

Following a storm event and once snow accumulation has ended, and within the time specified in Table 8.1, the objective shall be to return the road to at least the minimum surface condition stated in Table 8.1.

**Table 8.1–Snow Accumulation and Surface Condition Level of Service**

Road Characteristics		Response to Snow Accumulation		Surface Condition	
Road Class	Road Surface	Maximum Depth	Time	Condition Objective	Time
3	Asphalt	8 cm	12 hours	As bare as possible	18 hours
3	Surface Treatment	8 cm	12 hours	As bare as possible	18 hours
4	Asphalt	8 cm	16 hours	As bare as possible	24 hours
4	Surface Treatment	8 cm	16 hours	Snow packed	24 hours
4	Gravel	8 cm	16 hours	Snow packed	24 hours
5	Asphalt	10 cm	24 hours	Centre bare	24 hours
5	Surface Treatment	10 cm	24 hours	Snow packed	24 hours
5	Gravel	10 cm	24 hours	Snow packed	24 hours
6	Sidewalks	15 cm	36 hours	As bare as possible	36 hours
6	Municipal Parking Lots	15 cm	36 hours	As bare as possible	36 hours

**SECTION 8.2 Ice Formation Prevention and Treatment of Icy Roadways**

For the purpose of the prevention of ice formation on its roadways the Municipality of Town of Huntsville shall do the following in the 24-hour period preceding an alleged formation of ice on a roadway:

- (1) monitor the weather in accordance with SECTION 5.0
- (2) patrol representative roadways in accordance with SECTION 6.0
- (3) if it is determined that there is a substantial probability of ice forming on a roadway, as a result from the activities noted above under paragraph (1) or (2), treat the roadway to prevent ice formation within the time set out in Table 8.2 to this section, starting from the time that the Director, Manager, Patrol Person, or designate determines is the appropriate time to deploy resources for that purpose.

In the event that ice forms on a road despite the efforts listed above, the Municipality of Town of Huntsville shall treat the icy roadway, by means of applying material to the roadway, including but not limited to, salt, sand or any combination of salt and sand, within the minimum time set out in Table 8.2

**Table 8.2 – Ice Formation Prevention and Icy Roadways Response Time**

	<b>Minimum Standards to Treat Icy Roads</b>
<b>Road Class</b>	<b>Response Time</b>
3	8 hours
4	16 hours
5	16 hours

**SECTION 9.0 EMERGENCY WINTER CONTROL ROUTE**

During extreme winter storm conditions and/or between the hours of 8 p.m. to 4 a.m., winter control operations will be conducted along the Emergency Winter Control Route identified in Table 9.1 below provided a work stoppage has not been implemented as outlined in SECTION 7.3 of this procedure.

**Table 9.1 – Emergency Winter Control Route**

Rural Roads

Road	From	To
<b>Town Centre</b>		
Town Line Road West	Brunel Road	Yonge St South
Yonge St South	Town Line Road West	Main St West
Florence's/Johanna St	Brunel Road	Yonge St South
Centre St	Hwy 60	End
Cliff/Lake Dr/Meadow	King William	King William
Hodges Lane	West Rd	Hunters Bay
Hunters Bay	Hodges lane	Silverwood Dr
Hanes Road	West Road	Hwy 60
Ravensglen Crest	Ravenscliffe	End
<b>North West Huntsville</b>		
Old North Road	Hwy 11	North Waseosa lake
North Waseosa Lake	Hwy 11	End
East Waseosa Lake Road	North Waseosa Lake	End
Fowlers	Ravenscliffe	Old North Road
South Waseosa Lake	Ravenscliffe	End
Skyhills Road	Ravenscliffe	End
<b>South West Huntsville</b>		
Old Muskoka Road	Madill Church Road	End
Greer Road	Hwy 11	South Mary lake Road
<b>South East Huntsville</b>		
North Mary Lake	Brunel Road	End
Chub Lake Road	North Mary lake	End
East Browns Road	Brunel Road	End

**SECTION 10.0 WINTER CONTROL OPERATIONS - GENERAL**

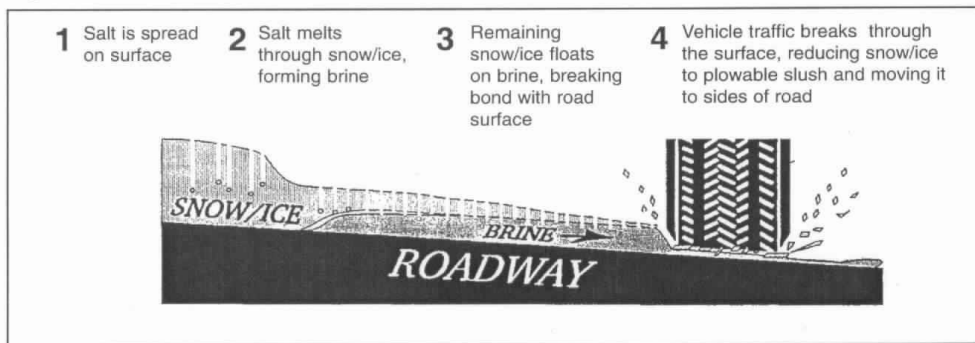
The Municipality of the Town of Huntsville currently has approximately 824 lane kilometers of road, comprised of approximately 622 lane kilometers are considered rural roads, 131 lane kilometers are semi-urban, 52 lane kilometers are urban and 18 lane kilometers are industrial

For the purpose of winter control operations, the Municipalities roads have been subdivided into designated plow routes. Public Works staff will begin winter control operations in the general priority sequence set out in prescribed plow routes or as directed by the Director of Public Works or designate, taking into consideration the start and expected duration of a winter storm event.

Designated routes take approximately eight (8) to ten (10) hours to complete, depending on weather, traffic, available staff and equipment, and number of vehicles parked on the roadways.

**SECTION 10.1 Application of Salt**

- The Municipality of Town of Huntsville uses both salt and treated salt within its Urban Centres.
- The use of salt is to be limited, in terms of both quantity and frequency, to that which is necessary to prevent snow and ice from bonding to the pavement or to remove ice, once formed on the pavement.
- Salt or treated salt applied to snow, forms a brine mixture. This reduces the possibility of the snow bonding to, or packing on, the pavement. It also prevents ice build-up and allows the plow to remove the snow easier. Salt, assisted by sun, traffic and warmer daytime temperatures, is also used as a melting agent to eliminate icy conditions.
- If the pavement is dry and the snow is not packing, salting is not recommended.
- Generally, 100% salt is not to be applied to gravel and surface treated roads.



**SECTION 10.2      Application of Sand / Winter Grit**

- Generally, grit used for winter maintenance shall be approximately 4% mix ratio of salt to sand and shall be stored at Madill yard with the salt stored indoors.
- The use of grit is to be limited, in terms of both quantity and frequency, to that which is necessary to address road conditions at the judgement of the Operator.
- Generally, grit is only to be applied to all hard surface roads when it is determined that salt will be ineffective to address road conditions.

**SECTION 10.3      Preseason Preparation**

- Winter maintenance equipment shall be set up for operation prior to November 1st and operated to ensure proper working order.
- Supervisors and Operators shall review routes to become familiar with road alignments and new hazards and conditions that may have developed since the previous winter season, such as mail boxes, driveway entrances, deteriorating road surfaces, manholes, etc.

**SECTION 10.4      Snow Dumps**

- Snow dump locations shall be reviewed annually to determine availability and functionality relative to any change in operations.
- Snow dump locations are as follows:
  - Madill Public Works Yard

**SECTION 10.5      Communications**

- All maintenance staff shall provide a contact number where they wish to be contacted so that they can immediate response to call out in the event of winter storm conditions.
- Cellular phones shall be provided to Supervisors and staff working on-call duties.
- All maintenance vehicles shall be equipped with two-way radio equipment.

**SECTION 10.6      Prior to Storm Event**

- As a minimum, weather monitoring will be conducted on a regular basis as described in SECTION 5.0 of this procedure. Further weather monitoring may be conducted when possible through the gathering of information via the following available sources:
  - Environment Canada Weather monitoring channel, Huntsville, Muskoka, Ontario
  - Faxes received daily from Environment Canada Public Weather Recording
  - Environment Canada Web site (Huntsville)
- Inspect equipment to ensure proper working order. Have any breakdown repaired immediately.
- Organize or call out operators according to conditions.
- Continue road patrolling as the storm begins, to direct and monitor effectiveness of winter maintenance operations and to relay road and weather information.

- Ensure that there is adequate salt and sand available.

**SECTION 10.7            During Storm Event**

- Conduct road inspections to monitor weather and road conditions.
- Predetermined routes for plowing, sanding and salting shall be followed in all instances except in cases of extreme emergency or critical situations, upon determination by Director of Public Works or designate.
- Spot sanding and salting/treated salting shall be carried out at bridges, intersections, hills, curves and other locations, as required. Operators shall use judgement to address well known areas of continuous problem and concern.
- Special attention and consideration shall be given to roads leading to emergency services, such as hospitals and fire stations.
- Generally, accumulation of precipitation is to be plowed to the right of the traveled portion of the roadway.
- Vehicle operating speeds shall be set at the discretion and judgement of the Operator based on storm conditions.
- Subject to observed conditions and/or forecasted weather conditions, resources may be deployed prior to reaching the accumulation depths set out in Table 8.1 in an effort to ensure that the accumulation of snow is maintained at levels less than or equal to the maximum depths specified within the time frames indicated in this procedure for the duration of the storm.
- The Director of Public Works or designate shall have the authority to pull municipal equipment off the road during the most extreme and severe conditions (ie. white outs, ice storms, etc.) at his/her discretion.

**SECTION 10.8            Between Storm Events**

- Continue road patrol as described in SECTION 5.0 of this procedure.
- Check and clear drainage facilities.
- Check and clear signs and highway markers
- Clean-up and winging will be carried out principally during regularly scheduled shifts after the storm, at the discretion of the Director of Public Works or designate.
- Push back snow at intersections to improve site lines.
- Note any damage that may have resulted from previous storms.

**SECTION 10.9                    Snow Removal**

- Snow removal will be conducted in the downtown core, at the determination of the Director of Public Works or designate when snow banks exceed 2.0 meters in height. Excluding District roads which are a District of Muskoka responsibility
- Snow removal shall be conducted as time and resources permit.
- Snow removal will be conducted in residential neighbourhoods only under extreme winter snow accumulations.

**SECTION 10.10                    Snow Removal - Accessible Parking Sidewalk Access**

- Curbside snow buildup on the sidewalk adjacent to public accessible parking spaces due to prior snowplowing activities shall be cleared away as bare as reasonable to permit easy access between the parking space and the adjacent sidewalk.
- Mechanical or manual means of snow clearing shall be utilized depending on available resources, and the most practical procedures determined on a site by site basis. Where practical, curbside clearing will be integrated with Sidewalk clearing.
- Clearing activities will commence upon determination by the Director of Public Works or designate that conditions warrant deployment of resources.

**SECTION 10.11                    Mail Box Damage**

- The Municipality will consider repair/replacement of a damaged mailbox if the damage caused is clearly the result of an impact by a plow operated by the Municipality.
- The Municipality will not replace or repair mailboxes damaged by the impact of snow propelled by a plow when plowing snow during a snowfall event.
- Even if impacted by a plow, the Municipality will not replace a mailbox assembly that has been constructed or installed in a manner that interferes with routine snow removal or in a manner which clearly presents an unacceptable risk to snow removal operations or the traveling public.
- Owners are encouraged to contact Canada Post for installation specifications for new mailbox installations.

**SECTION 10.12                    Sand/Salt/Winter Grit Pick-up**

- Supplies of sand, winter grit and salt/treated salt are not provided and is prohibited for pick-up by the general public or by private enterprise.

**SECTION 11.0 INTERFERENCE WITH WINTER CONTROL OPERATIONS**

In order to achieve the objectives of the Winter Control Quality Standards, as approved by Municipal Council, it is necessary to enforce the by-laws under the Highway Traffic Act (Section 170, Subsection (7)) and the Municipal By-law 2008-146.

**SECTION 11.1 Ticketing and Towing Procedures**

- Vehicles parked in contravention of the Highway Traffic Act and the Municipal By-law will be tagged with a warning notice by Municipal staff. Municipal staff will endeavor to place a warning notice on all vehicles in contravention prior to removal, except under emergency or safety considerations, at the discretion of the supervisor on duty.
- During the Winter Control Program from November 15 through December 15 one courtesy warning notice will be issued per vehicle.
- Vehicles that have been previously tagged with a warning notice will be removed or ticketed in violation of the Highway Traffic Act and the Municipal By - Law 2013-97.
- When a vehicle is being towed and impounded, municipal staff must contact the O.P.P. Communications Centre at 1-888-310-1122 prior to removal. The centre will require identification, municipality, and reason for vehicle removal, license plate number and location of impoundment.
- The Municipality and/or staff will not be responsible for the towing service, storage or any related charges or damages to the impoundment.