
NORTH OGDEN CITY STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL
FROM: BRENT TAYLOR, MAYOR
SUBJECT: WINTER PARKING ORDINANCE
DATE: 12/30/2014

Per requests from the City Council, we would like to have a discussion during the January 6th Work Session about this ordinance and its enforcement. Items for discussion include:

- Use of warnings vs. tickets
- Holidays and out-of-town visitors
- Timeframes for enforcement

Currently our ordinance is written as a general prohibition on parking on city streets overnight during the winter months, regardless of whether or not it is currently snowing. Additionally, we also prohibit all parking on streets, regardless of the hour, during a snowstorm or within 24 hours after the end of a snowstorm. Here is the key portion of our ordinance:

A. Prohibited Parking:

1. It is unlawful for the owner of any vehicle to park his or her vehicle, or allow his or her vehicle to be parked, on any public street or roadway in the city between the hours of twelve o'clock (12:00) midnight and six o'clock (6:00) A.M. from November 15 through March 15 of each year, except for physicians or emergency vehicles in emergency situations.
2. It is unlawful for the owner of any vehicle to park his or her vehicle, or allow his or her vehicle to be parked, on any public street or roadway in the city during any snowstorm or within twenty four (24) hours following the cessation of snow after any snowstorm.

During the recent storm we had a lot of vehicles parked on the street, both overnight and during the day of the storm itself. I was out with the plow teams several times on Christmas Day and again on Dec 28th and there were lots of vehicles on the roads in both cases. Here are some pics I took:





The problem with these cars is that they leave a large unplowed area once they are moved, which often goes unplowed because the plow trucks do not return if the storm has ended. These areas often become icy and slick. The challenge is finding the right balance on when to enforce the ordinance, because enforcement during a snowstorm itself is often a challenge because the police are tied up with more important calls (traffic accidents, slide-offs, etc.).

I asked Chief Warren for some input and here is his statement:

“Most municipalities in Weber County that have winter parking ordinances have adopted one very similar to ours. The only noticeable difference between ordinances is the time of day it’s enforced, and the month of the year it goes into effect and/or expires. I support the current ordinance, but would suggest that unless it is snowing, written warnings are issued up until Dec. 1st. (However, I wouldn’t advertise this.) I’ve asked our police officers to use their judgment wisely and be less aggressive with enforcement during the recent Christmas holiday, but if it’s snowing, then enforce the ordinance to help our snow removal crews clear the streets safely, and in a timely manner. I have always felt we should be proactive vs. reactive when it comes to enforcing this ordinance. Oftentimes, when these winter storms roll in, officers get busy handling crashes or calls for service and have limited time to enforce the ordinance. It is difficult to get through the entire city in one night because of calls for service and other assignments, and sometimes cars are parked after we’ve gone thru a particular subdivision so we may miss the habitual offenders. Out of area/state visitors are difficult to distinguish, but we will do our best to give them the benefit of the doubt and issue warnings on the first offense. As far as repeat offenders, there are very few during the five months the winter parking ordinance is in effect.”

Let’s have discussion on this ordinance on January 6th and we can see what the Council would like us to focus on, and whether any changes are needed to the ordinance at this time.