

Snow Plowing Damage Procedures of Other Municipalities

We are trying to determine the best course of action to handle damage to resident's property located in the city right of way, such as mailboxes, fences, etc. Shelly sent out a request for information from many cities along the Wasatch Front. We had numerous responses, located below are responses to our request.

If the blade or truck hit the mailbox/fence/ETC they will make repairs, if damage is due to the snow/slush/ice being removed they do not accept responsibility for that. This is an unwritten policy and is subject to change depending on support from council/mayor. Paul Ellsworth, Pleasant View City

Mailboxes: In most cases, damage occurs during the plowing process because aged posts or improperly mounted boxes are not able to withstand the rigors of the winter plowing season. The City will repair/replace a mailbox or post that is damaged due to contact with a snowplow blade up to a cost of \$100.00. Residents who choose to install a mailbox that has a greater value do so at their own risk. Mailboxes should be installed to withstand heavy or wet snow coming off the end of the plow. If damage occurs due to snow discharge or snow storage, the City will not be responsible for repairs. Lisa Titensor, CMC Clinton City, Deputy Recorder

Our PW department usually handles these issues directly by sending a worker out immediately after the call to see if it makes sense to us that the City has caused the damage. We can also check with the driver if there is a question. Where we have knocked over a mailbox or damaged a fence, either by direct contact or by pushing snow into an object, we have our PW department go out and take care of the problem right away without having them file a formal claim. If it is something serious, like damage to a brick mailbox or to another vehicle, we ask the claimant to file a claim and we handle it through our claims process. Jim Mason Assistant City Manager, Layton City

Unwritten policy, If property is damaged and it is determined by plowing we take care of it. Scott Anderson Public Works Director, Woodsross City

Our City policy is to replace damages caused by direct contact with the snowplow or other vehicle. There have been times when the resident has gone to the Mayor and the Mayor has told us to take care of it, but typically only replace damage caused by direct contact. Mark Nielsen, Logan City

We will repair/replace a resident's mailbox or fencing if it is damaged by the slush coming out of the plow. We don't have a written policy. Every incident is sent to Risk Management and a claim is filled out by the resident. If the damage is obvious and a simple repair can be made we usually will make the repairs before the paperwork is filled out. To prevent this from occurring I have told my snowplow drivers to slow down when plowing the shoulder areas (10-12 mph) and it has cut down on the amount of damage that happens during a snow storm. Jed Bell Street Division Manager, City of South Jordan

We are unique in the fact that our Public Works services are contracted out to a private company including snow removal. If we get calls of damage we go out and look and determine if the damage was in fact caused by snow plows, if so we turn it over to the contractor to make the repairs. If we don't think the damage was done by plows or could have been a hit and run we will turn it over to our insurer and let them go through their process. I hope this helps, if you need more please let me know. Mike Allen, Cottonwood Heights Public Works

Typically if we physically hit something with the plow then we replace it. If the item was installed properly and according to city ordinance can also come into play on the decision to replace it. We have been trying to decide if we need to change or strength our policy on this. Could you send me the feedback you receive form the other cities, it would be good to know what everyone else is doing. Shawn Douglas, Riverdale City Public Works

If anyone thinks any property damage has occurred due to snow plows, they can submit a city claim form. City staff will investigate the claim and determine if we are at fault. Snow plow operators are counseled to drive at an appropriate speed to avoid snow being thrown too forcefully. Don't recall any claims of damage behind sidewalks. We typically don't plow all the way to the curb – travel lanes only. Rick

As time consuming and costly as it can be and given the myriad of items located in close proximity to the back of curb, we replace or repair all damage occurring to mailboxes, fencing, railings, etc. regardless of whether the item is struck by our vehicle or the snow that is pushed by that vehicle. Steve Tozier, Heber City Public Works

Harrisville City does not replace mailboxes that are damaged by snow, in the course of regular plowing. If the cities equipment directly damages the property city crews with fix or replace the property. Gene Bingham Public works Director, Harrisville City