

Snow Responsibilities at The Trails of Woodlot

When snow is forecast

1. Move cars off the roads

The Bureau of Highways reminds drivers not to park on streets, especially on a cul-de-sac as that makes snow removal nearly impossible for crews. Do not park cars near the entrance to a neighbor's driveway, near a fire hydrant or near a cluster mailbox. Vehicles should be parked in driveways. This allows police officers, firefighters, and paramedics to respond quickly to public safety tasks while driving in treacherous conditions and leads to quick and complete clearing of the roads.

2. Move debris away from storm drains

If you notice that the storm drains are blocked or clogged PRIOR to snow, please call Highways at 410-313-7450 or go to <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/tell-hoco> to report.

Snow Removal Responsibilities

1. Snow removal responsibility for Roads

a) Single Houses

Howard County is responsible for plowing the following roads:

- Woodlot Road,
- Woodnote Lane,
- Wooded Way,
- Harvest Scene, and
- Bucksaw Ct.

b) Townhouses

The Homeowners Association is responsible for plowing the following road:

- High Wheels Court.

A private contractor hired by the Homeowners Association will clear the Townhouse roads and parking lots.

2. Snow removal responsibility for Sidewalks

a) Property Owner Responsibility:

- Property owners or occupants must remove snow from the entire length of the sidewalk within 48 hours after a snow event. This obligation of each homeowner is outlined in the Howard County Code, Section **18.402(h) - Maintenance of sidewalks, driveways and sod**. See below. Snow can be deposited next to the sidewalk near the curb, but owners must ensure it is cleared properly. Provide a pathway wide enough for safe pedestrian and wheelchair use. If residents need assistance clearing their sidewalks, they can seek help from the **Snow Help Program**. Information on this program is below. Residents may also want to delay shoveling driveway aprons and sidewalks until the street has been completely cleared. Otherwise, it is very likely a full blade of snow will slide off the plow onto the driveway.

b) HOA Responsibility:

- Sidewalks that are on not adjacent to a homeowners property will be cleared by the contractor hired by the HOA.

c) Howard County Action:

- If snow is not removed within the required time frame, the County can intervene and follow enforcement procedures.

d) Penalties:

- Failure to comply with the snow removal requirement can result in fines enforced by the County. Fines for non-compliance range from not less than \$25.00 nor more than \$50.00.

3. Snow removal responsibility for Mailboxes

- The Post Office does not remove snow at any of the cluster mailboxes in Columbia. The responsibility to clear the mailboxes belongs to the residents who use the cluster boxes to ensure that the area in front of and behind the box is shoveled and salted for the safety and convenience of all.

4. Storm drain

- If a storm drain is adjacent to a property, please ensure that it is shoveled open to allow the melting snow to drain and prevent street flooding.

If a property owner has not removed the snow within the allotted time frame, reach out and ask the property owner if he or she needs assistance. Although the property owner might like to comply with the law, many residents are physically unable to shovel snow and ice and are hesitant to request help from neighbors or friends. Your thoughtfulness can make a big difference to someone who might otherwise be unable to cope.

Howard County Code, Section 18.402 (h). Maintenance of sidewalks, driveways and sod.

Sec. 18.402(h)(1)

“It shall be the duty and obligation of the owner of property abutting a sidewalk in a public right-of-way to remove snow from the sidewalk within 48 hours after the snow has fallen. In the case of a multiunit building with more than one occupant, it shall be the duty of the lessor to remove the snow unless the lessor has obligated a tenant who is actually occupying the property to do so. Any owner of property abutting a sidewalk in a public right-of-way, lessor of a multiunit building, or tenant obligated by the lessor, who fails to remove the snow from the abutting sidewalk within 48 hours after the snow has fallen shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine of not less than \$25.00 nor more than \$50.00. Alternatively, or in addition to and concurrent with all other remedies, the Department of Public Works or the Police Department may enforce the subsection with civil penalties pursuant to title 24, "Civil Penalties," of the Howard County Code. A violation shall be a Class E offense.”

Sec. 18.402 (h)(2)

“If the County Executive declares a state of emergency under section 6.103 of the County Code, the County Executive may extend the time to remove snow.”

We appreciate your patience and cooperation in our efforts to provide the best possible snow removal service to our communities.

For more information on snow removal and to report concerns, residents can visit the Howard County Bureau of Highways website, <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/public-works/bureau-highways> or contact the Highways Operations Division at 410-313-7450.

Snow Help Program: The Howard County Senior Information and Assistance Office coordinates volunteers willing to help remove snow for seniors and physically disabled individuals. Call 410-313-7212 for assistance.