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# Snow Removal Guideline





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# *Introduction*

*"To be prepared is half the victory."*

*—Miguel de Cervantes*

▲ Waking up to a fresh blanket of snow can be a beautiful sight, but not if you're a property manager who has a large property to clear before tenants begin to leave for work or employees begin to arrive. Snow and ice removal for the parking lots, walkways, and entryways of even a small property is a huge undertaking requiring lots of manpower and equipment.

Well before winter, you should make preparations for snow removal for your commercial property. In fact, it's best to secure your contract by September to ensure you're getting the right contractor and to give that contractor time to prepare supplies for the upcoming season.

Before you sign a contract, it's important to understand all aspects of the snow removal process so that you can make an informed decision that you'll be satisfied with.



# Safety



▲ Did you know that 90% of walkway injuries happen when there is less than 1 inch of snow? In recent years, there has been an explosion in snow and ice-related slip and fall lawsuits with the average cost being more than \$33,000, and if there's a workman's compensation claim, that average cost goes up to more than \$48,000 per incident. Without professional snow removal, your company is at great risk for expensive lawsuits and higher insurance premiums. We provide your property with complete snow and ice risk management.

We follow all Sima (Snow and Ice Management Association) Safety Standards for salt use recommendations and Best Practices for snow and ice removal. Every winter storm is different, but by following these standard practices every time, we can make your campus safe for people on your property.



# *Liability*



- ▲ Who's liable? If you do take on the task of performing your own snow and ice removal for your property, you open yourself up to potential lawsuits if you don't do the job sufficiently. By hiring a fully-insured company like Bluegrass, you can rest assured that your walkways and parking lots will be cleared to the highest standards to minimize the occurrence of slips and falls. We closely monitor the weather and keep thorough records of when we plow and when we salt to ensure we're making your campus as safe as possible and so that if there is a slip and fall, we know exactly when and how the property was treated. Hiring a professional snow removal company will give you peace of mind that your campus is properly cleaned up from even the biggest snow or ice storms.



# Weather



- ▲ Weather is unpredictable and can change from a beautiful, sunny day to a full-blown blizzard in the blink of an eye. Each storm is as individual as a snowflake, creating many factors that affect how and when plowing takes place. High winds can crop up and limit visibility for drivers. Some areas may receive heavier bands of snow than others, requiring a greater concentration of snow removal crews. Even a single degree drop in temperature can greatly affect the snow removal process. If temps before a storm hover around the freezing mark, the storm can produce a mix of freezing rain and snow, or they drop after a storm, the snow can harden and become more difficult and time-consuming to remove. Temperature, duration, intensity, total snow accumulation, and whether or not the storm occurs at night or during the day all factor greatly in how a storm is handled.



# *Weather Monitoring*



▲ Some companies have weather monitoring as an add-on feature to their services, but at Bluegrass, we know how vital monitoring the weather is to the snow removal process and wouldn't do this job without it, and that's why it's included in our services. By keeping a close eye on the current conditions through The Weather Pros, we can make better decisions as to when to plow or when it would be more effective to salt, so you can rest assured that your property will be cleared and ready in a timely manner no matter how much snow and ice lies ahead.

If your snow removal company isn't thoroughly monitoring the weather, how do they make their decisions? They're wasting time and resources, and they may treat more or less than needed for an individual storm. By getting current surface temperatures and weather conditions through The Weather Pros, we can anticipate when our services will be needed and how much deicer and manpower will be required. While this is not our only tool for making our final decision, it goes a long way to helping us make the right one for each storm.



# *Expectations*



- ▲ Before you contact a snow removal professional, ask yourself what your expectations as far as snow and ice removal are. Are your expectations what you need to have a safe property? What is your budget that will allow you to meet these expectations? Without a clear understanding of what you expect to be done before, during, and after a storm, your snow removal company is left with assuming your expectations. When entering into a snow removal contract with us, we'll tour your property and get a clear picture of what areas need to be cleared and come up with a plan for snow removal that outlines all expectations and specific costs to do the job thoroughly. At Bluegrass Landscaping and Maintenance, we know the importance in having clear expectations with everything we do. We work for you and want you to trust that the work you expect is the work that will be done. As with any landscape job, you get what you pay for, and adequate funds must be allocated to clear a property to make it safe after a snow or ice storm. Our main goal is safety, and we have the professional crews and the right equipment to make your property safe for your employees, clients, or tenants safe to travel and walk on.



# *Bidding Styles*

*There are several bidding styles that are utilized for pricing, all with their own unique advantages and disadvantages.*

## ▲ *Hourly*

If you choose an hourly contract, your snow removal company will bid an hourly price for every hour put into clearing your property. It may include different rates for various types of snow removal, such as the use of equipment, man-hours spent shoveling walkways, and will also include costs for materials such as deicers.

**Pros:** On hourly contracts, crews generally do a thorough and excellent job because they're getting paid for every minute of it.

**Cons:** Hourly contracts tend to be more expensive. Because the contractor is more concerned with man-hours than getting the job done quickly, there is no reason to invest in equipment that will improve efficiency. They can get in more hours by being inefficient. This method usually includes travel time to your property, so you're paying for time that they're not even on your campus.

## ▲ *Per inch, 2-inches, 3-inches*

This type of bidding is based solely on snow accumulation. For example, with a 2" schedule, there would be a set price for 0-2" of snow, meaning if the accumulation was less than 2", your property would be plowed for that price. Between 2.01-4" would be a higher price, and so on. If de-icer is needed, there are additional charges for its applications.

**Pros:** Contractors will do this work as efficiently as they can in order to move onto their next job. This means they'll make sure to have the latest and greatest equipment and will keep it properly maintained. Employees will be trained on best practices because it ensures that time and materials aren't wasted.

**Cons:** In the effort to squeeze in more jobs, there can be some quality issues. Having a quality plan with your contractor can help. When measuring per inch, it needs to be clear whether that measurement is per storm or per 24 hours and how exactly it is measured to avoid any misunderstandings.



## ▲ *Seasonal Contract*

Seasonal contracts offer a set price for the entire season, no matter the snowfall amounts for that season. It is usually based on the average snow accumulation each year for that area for a specific number of years, usually the last 100.

**Pros:** Seasonal contracts are easier to budget for both the contractor and the property manager because there are no surprises. No matter what the accumulation for that season, only that set amount will be charged. This can be helpful for contractors as it helps them to cover the initial cost to prep for coming snow season. Property managers like it because it helps them stay on budget even in a particularly stormy season.

**Cons:** Depending on snowfall amounts, it can seem unfair to either side. If there's a lot of snow, it costs the contractor more in manpower and resources than planned, and if there is little or no snow, the property manager may feel like they paid for nothing, which they essentially did. Hard feelings can be remedied by implementing a long-term contract instead (at least 5 years) to allow snow accumulations to average out over time.

## ▲ *Per Push*

With a per push contract, there is a price each time a push, or plow session, is done. If you need your property cleared several times during a storm, there is a charge for the set price each time. It's more cost-effective to wait until the storm is over and have it done in one push, although there may be a limit to the number of inches a contractor will wait for before plowing because the deeper the snow, the more difficult it is to plow.

**Pros:** Some businesses simply prefer to pay each time snow and ice are removed, plowed, ice treated, etc. Bluegrass' plan is a metric-based quality plan grading each area of their property.

**Cons:** Depending on your type of business, this could mean more than one visit—one to clear your property for opening, once again during the storm, and then again after the storm has passed for clean-up. It also can mean a lower level of service if not properly monitored.



# Special Conditions



- ▲ Do you have surfaces that require extra care? We have the expertise to handle even the most difficult or delicate surfaces without causing plow damage.

**Pervious Pavement**—plows can damage pervious pavement and pavers, so we use poly blades or rotary brooms to minimize damage.

**Helipads**—as these areas are often for emergency situations, they must be cleared promptly and snow must not be piled near the pad due to potential visibility problems from the spinning rotors, and the right amount of deicer must be used because excess can be blown around by the rotors and damage vehicles. If the helipad is heated, it may only require shoveling.

**Garages**—piling snow on the top of parking garages can cause structural damage due to the excess weight, and removal can be tricky because any snow pushed over the edge is dangerous and parking garages have many curbs and obstacles to maneuver around. Because garages are made of concrete, salt can't be applied because it's damaging to concrete surfaces so a less harmful chemical needs to be applied which may be more expensive.

**High-end surfaces such as granite, marble, etc.**—we take great care in snow removal on your more expensive surfaces and use methods that will not damage them.

If your property has any special conditions that need to be met, Bluegrass Lawncare can meet those conditions and handle your snow maintenance dutifully.



# Equipment

▲ Bluegrass Landscaping and Maintenance has a fleet of vehicles for snow and ice removal. Our fleet includes:

**Trucks:** with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) of 26,000, our trucks make short work of even the biggest storms. They are also equipped with salt applicators and have liquid deicing available.

## Snow-Pushing Units:

**Skid Steers**—Skid steers have great maneuverability. They can be used for removing snow from a property or in conjunction with attachments for plowing.

**Loaders**—Loaders are powerhouses for snow removal. They have 360° visibility which can be critical for clearing parking lots and can be more cost-effective than skid steers.

**Backhoes**—Larger than loaders, backhoes can clear large amounts of snow quickly, especially when equipped with Sno-Pushers.



**Plows:** We have more than 100 truck plows.

**Box Plows**—we have standard box plows as well as Arctic Sno-Pushers. These pushers allow us to cut through the toughest snow and ice conditions while contouring to the grade of any surface.

**Poly Blades**—tough polyethylene blades won't dent and cause damage to plowed surfaces like steel blades can. They glide over surfaces and clear over most obstacles.

**ATVs:** their maneuverability make them perfect for clearing large campus sidewalks, as well as deicing them with drop spreaders.

**Sidewalk Equipment:** our sidewalk crews use a variety of products to prepare your walkways for safe use: Brooms, Shovels, and Spreaders.





# Deicers

▲ There are many options when it comes to deicing a commercial property to make it safe. When choosing a deicer, it's important to look at the price, its effectiveness, and its safety. A veterinary office wouldn't want to use something that could cause harm to their patient's paws and properties with walkways bordering turf wouldn't want to use anything that would kill the grass.

**Salt:** Rock salt is the cheapest, and therefore, most commonly used deicer. In recent years, there have been shortages in rock salt that have caused its price to rise. Because of its comparatively high melting point of 15-20°F, there are more freezing/thawing cycles which could cause damage to your surfaces. It's important to know how much your salt removal company will have on hand and if they have satellite depots around the city that are easily accessible in a storm.

**Calcium Chloride:** CaCl releases heat as it melts the ice so it melts faster than any other deicer, and can be used to pretreat an area before a storm. It can, however, create wet surfaces which can be dangerous if they refreeze. It melts down to -26°F so it's more effective in lower temperatures.

**Magnesium:** Similar to CaCl, Magnesium heats as it melts ice and absorbs moisture from the air causing wet areas. It can also be used as a pretreatment. It melts down to -20°F so it's more effective than salt but less effective than CaCl.

**Ice Melt Products:** There are lots of deicers on the market, usually made up of a mix of chemicals so it's important to read their ingredients to get a better understanding of their effectiveness and safety.

**Ice B'Gone Magic:** This deicer works longer and at lower temperatures than other conventional ice melting products. It's safer on all surfaces, is environmentally friendly, 100% biodegradable, and is safe for pets. If used correctly, it can work at -35°F. By using Ice B'Gone, rock salt applications can be reduced by 30- 50%. It's available in:

**Liquid** that can be sprayed directly on surfaces to eliminate icing or sprayed onto your existing rock salt to increase its effectiveness.

**Granular** which is rock salt that has been treated with liquid Ice B'Gone.



# Quality Program



▲ When arranging your contract with your snow removal company, it's important to understand exactly how they perform quality control on their services. Do they perform routine inspections during and after the storm? How does the snow removal company grade quality? At Bluegrass, we use a metrics-based system to perform random quality checks to your property to ensure that our crews are meeting your expectations in snow removal and treatment of your campus.

Bluegrass Landscaping and Maintenance has been serving St. Louis since 1982. We work quickly, efficiently, and thoroughly to clear your property in the event of a storm and we always put safety first. As your snow removal contractor, we'll clear your property quickly and thoroughly to mitigate the risks associated with a snow emergency that can result in injuries or property damage.

**Relax, we've got you covered.**



# *Additional Services*



▲ Bluegrass Landscape and Maintenance is a full-service landscape company that provides a comprehensive range of commercial landscaping services to create and maintain a beautiful, manicured landscape for your business.

## **Maintenance**

Our maintenance services include complete lawn care such as mowing, aeration, and overseeding, plant bed care, applying mulch, and caring for your trees, shrubs, and plants.

## **Landscape Construction**

Our landscape designers can create a landscape with beauty and function that is welcoming, efficient, safe, and attractive and our landscape installers will bring that design to life, no matter how simple or complex the design.

## **Irrigation**

We perform regular maintenance on your irrigation system to ensure it is always working properly. Our team focuses on the best irrigation strategies to conserve water and save money.

## **Bio-retention**

We maintain bio-retention areas to enhance the beauty of your landscape while serving their function.



