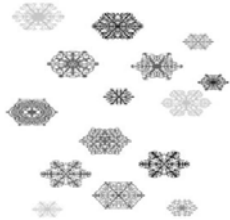




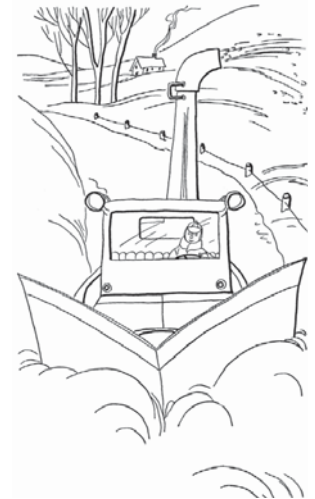
READY OR NOT HERE IT COMES - WINTER THAT IS



Back to school time is synonymous with fall arriving and winter just around the corner. Have you started mounting those snow plows and brushing up on your routes and driving skills? Will you be ready this winter to effectively fight snowstorms and transform ice into safe driving conditions for your community? There are many variables to consider when creating a winter road maintenance strategy, including environmental impacts, pre-season planning, execution and post-season maintenance. Planning ahead and organizing your resources, including personnel and equipment, is crucial for success.

Bring out those notes from your post season meetings this past spring and recap the answers to these important questions, in addition to others you may have. Invite people to come prepared to identify problems they encountered, the impact those problems had on operations and ideas for corrective measures. Distribute these questions beforehand to help participants focus their suggestions for improved winter maintenance.

- Did our department meet or exceed our winter maintenance performance goals?
- How well did scheduling work? What changes do we need to make this year?
- Do we have our part-time people lined up?
- What communication snags affected performance?
- What areas need additional training?
- Were there any material quality issues? How about ordering, availability or vendor delivery? Is your salt shed filled already, or will it be soon?
- Were there any significant maintenance issues?
- Is your equipment in good shape and ready to go?
- Have you calibrated your equipment yet?
- Did issues arise working with other departments that affected the operation? Have they been resolved?
- Is some or all of your winter maintenance work contracted? Did the management and oversight regarding quality of work meet your satisfaction?
- How did internal and external communications go?
- Are you happy with how you'll get your weather information this year?
- Were there design or maintenance problems with roads, drainage or utilities that had an adverse effect on snow and ice operations? Have those issues been addressed?
- Has everyone made a trial run of their routes with their equipment? Did you make note of any changes from last year, such as a new fence that was placed in the right-of-way?
- Have any school bus routes changed, requiring an adjustment of your plow route?
- Was your budget adequate to perform winter maintenance operations? If not, did you make the necessary changes?



Be open to the variety of ideas that are presented and innovative solutions. Weigh both the challenges and possibilities of implementing the ideas that emerge. Prioritize your issues and determine the changes that need to be made. Make a pre-season and postseason meeting with as many departments as possible a regular part of your winter maintenance planning.