SNOW REMOVAL

An Environmentally Sound Approach

Facilities Management Grounds Maintenance recognizes its obligation to ensure proper and consistent snow removal. They concentrate on keeping the interior roadways, sidewalks, and parking lots cleared as soon as possible, during and after a snow fall.

You can help by moving your vehicle as soon as safely possible after a snow event. Vehicles left on campus for an extended time prevent safe and efficient snow removal and often require repeated salt applications to the recovered parking space.

While the application of salt has proven the most economical and effective for snow removal and safety measures, it does present environmental concern. Road salt can lead to increased sodium and chloride concentrations in surface and groundwater, which can adversely affect aquatic ecosystems, drinking water, and roadside vegetation.

With this in mind, Grounds Maintenance has employed an environmentally sound approach to snow removal on the two-lane campus roads. By taking advantage of the road contour and applying salt only to a narrow strip along the centerline, they can avoid salting the entire road surface. As traffic passes, salt is moved off the centerline, begins melting, and dissolves into liquid brine which drains toward both road shoulders for added coverage across the entire road. This pattern quickly gives vehicles clear pavement under at least two wheels while using less salt. It provides for vehicle safety yet reduces operating costs, supplies, and materials and redirects labor time to concentrate on clearing parking lots and sidewalks.

While the use of road salt along with snow plowing is recognized an efficient and budget-minded method of keeping roads clear and safe in hazardous winter conditions, Grounds Maintenance continues to research environmentally sound application materials and processes.

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