



## ***Marion County*** OREGON

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### **Marion County Public Works Crews Busy During Severe Weather**

Since last Sunday, the Marion County Public Works Operations' staff of 47 employees has been working around the clock to battle the severe road conditions resulting from the snow and ice. "Before the storm arrived, we anti-iced the roads, and since Sunday, higher elevation roads have required a great deal of plowing and sanding throughout the week," explained Don Newell, Marion County Road Operations Manager.

Marion County's fleet includes five trucks with sanders, four trucks for plowing, six grader plows, and three anti-icing trucks. The county receives continual weather updates working with ERF Company in Portland, which provides weather forecasting for municipalities and other industries.

This past week, the Marion County Public Works Dispatch Center (503-588-5304) has received numerous calls from the community with road-related questions. Here are the most common questions along with the answers:

How is it determined what roads are plowed first?

What roads are plowed first is predetermined by emergency routes and road classifications (larger streets are first – some small streets may not receive service due to current budgets and limited resources).

Can the public get sand from the county?

No. The sanding material we buy with dedicated road funds must be used on our roads, so we're not authorized to give it away. Sand is available to the public at many local lumber and home improvement stores, as well as sand and gravel suppliers. Kitty litter also works well as a traction aid.

Does the county use salt?

No, we use a liquid mix of magnesium chloride, many times in combination with sand. It is most effective in preventing black ice in the early stages of a storm, and due to the expensive cost and consistent sub-freezing temperatures, it has little usage as a de-icer in this event.

Will the county plow out my driveway?

No. Our mission is to make our roads and bridges safer for driving.

Will the county remove plowed snow from my driveway entrance?

No. We have to leave that to each property owner. Our funding is dedicated to road maintenance, so we're not authorized to do work on private property. During major snow events, our crews and equipment are stretched to the limit just keeping our main county roads passable. We do not have the resources to remove plowed snow from individual driveway approaches. Please safely open your driveway if plowed and deposit the excess snow on the shoulders and not on the road itself.

“We don't see any relief from freezing temperatures and moisture at least until Christmas Eve,” Newell explained. “Therefore, we will be continuing with 24 hour coverage as necessary throughout the county.”

For questions or concerns regarding Marion County roads, you may call the Marion County Public Works Dispatch Center at (503) 588-5304.

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