



NEWS ADVISORY

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For immediate release

MISSOULA BREAKS OUT THE SNOW SHOVELS

City asks residents to make it easier for their neighbors

Snow and ice have arrived in Missoula. This may be great for winter recreation, but it also makes it difficult for everyone who uses sidewalks to get around, especially the elderly and folks in wheelchairs. The City of Missoula asks all residents to keep their sidewalks clear.

Shoveling the sidewalks in front of your property is a basic courtesy for all who use them. And it's the law.

"Even a little bit of snow makes it much harder for some folks to get around," said Gregg Wood, City Compliance Manager. "We will enforce our ordinance, but primarily we want residents to be considerate about helping other people get around."

"Please do not shovel snow into the bike lanes," Wood adds. "It's not legal, and it seriously jeopardizes the safety of those who choose to bicycle in the winter."

The Missoula laws require residents to clear sidewalks of snow and ice by 9 a.m. after each snowfall and to keep their sidewalks free of snow and ice. Remember that chemical deicers containing chloride may damage the concrete surfaces of their sidewalks. The ordinance also includes businesses, which benefit from providing customers with safe places to walk.

To report a sidewalk that has not been shoveled, call the City at 552-6630 and give the address. When the City receives such a notice, an inspector will go out to look at the sidewalk. If the sidewalk is found to be not in compliance with the ordinance, the inspector will give the property owner 24 hours to clear the walk. If the walk is still not cleared after 24 hours, City staff members shovel the sidewalk, for which the property owner will be billed.

How can you help? It's simple, Wood says:

"First, keep your own walk clear when it snows, and keep it clear all winter. Sometimes even missing a day of shoveling can result in foot traffic compacting snow into an icy layer that is far more difficult to remove. Second, extend a helping hand. Offer a hand to those in your neighborhood who are unable to clear their own sidewalks."

Resources are available in Missoula for residents who are unable to clear their own sidewalks and cannot afford to pay to have them cleared. For information about those resources, call:

- Missoula Aging Services, call 728-7682
- 2-1-1 Information and Referral Line in Missoula, call 2-1-1

For an interview, call Gregg Wood directly at 552-6093.

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