



NEWS ADVISORY

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For immediate release

Break Out the Snow Shovels

Snow is falling and is expected to accumulate over the weekend. Now it's time for residents to do their part by keeping the sidewalks in front of their homes and businesses clear.

Shoveling the sidewalks is a basic courtesy for all who use them. It's especially helpful for people who have extra challenges on ice and snow, such as people who are elderly or use wheelchairs. 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."

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. Residents should not shovel snow into the bike lanes, a practice that jeopardizes the safety of people traveling by bicycle and is illegal.

Any person may call the City at 552-6630 to report that a sidewalk at a specific address has not been shoveled. 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, the inspector may have it cleared by a contractor, 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 helping hand to those in your neighborhood who are unable to clear their own sidewalks." Learn more at www.ci.missoula.mt.us.

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Questions? Want an interview?

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