



A Perfect Place For Faith & Family!

See for yourself! Schedule a tour today!

Calvary (231) 865-2141
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS CalvaryEagles.org

Give Your Child a Christ-Centered Education

Calvary Apply today!
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS (231) 865-2141
CalvaryEagles.org

Snowplows and Your Safety

by Calvin Holtrop

A huge, orange snowplow whooshes down your street. You hear the constant roar of the front-mounted plowing blade and the hiss of the ice scraper between the plow's front and back wheels. Massive waves of snow fly off the road, into yards and driveways, including your own. Then the plow, its warning lights ablaze, comes to the street's end, turns around, and barrels down the other side of the road to clear it of ice and snow.

But how did the snowplow get to your residential area?

The Muskegon County Road Commission has a plowing route, which prioritizes roads, from state trunklines—the major freeways and highways that intersect with our county—down to local subdivisions like yours.

According to the "Winter Operations Snow/Ice Plan", the road commission's top priority is 370 lane miles on US 31, I96, and the 5-lane part of M46 (Apple Avenue). Plows thoroughly clear these trunk lines of ice and snow. Bridge decks are also sprayed with an anti-icing material before storms.*

Next on the MCRC's priority list, there's Business 31, M37, M120, and Apple Avenue's 2-lane part—secondary trunk lines. These are plowed and scraped bare "wide enough for one wheel track in each direction," or plowed as thoroughly as Priority 1 roads if snow is drifting.

The county's primary system comes next in importance. It functions as "sort of a collection/distribution road network" that's "designed to carry greater traffic volumes, wider lane widths, higher speeds and greater weights, etc."** Plows scrape this road network and apply a sand/salt mix on hills and curves, around lights, and within 500 feet of intersections, to melt ice and improve traction.

Local paved roads, gravel roads, and subdivisions, "whose main function is to provide property access," get plowed in that order. The sand and salt mix is applied on hills, on curves, and within 100 feet of intersections on paved and gravel roads and 25 feet of intersections on subdivision streets.

No salt is applied when temperatures drop below 20 degrees, when there's continuous snow, or when winds are constant.

So, how can you prepare for the snowplows this winter? The Muskegon County Road Commission has some good advice:

- Don't plow snow into or across roads—it's dangerous and illegal
- Move your vehicles off of roadsides during snowstorms, and keep stray items (like your garbage bin) out of roadways
- Don't let snow near the road pile up high enough to obstruct vision at intersections
- Don't allow kids to play in roads being plowed or in ditches, and don't throw snowballs at traffic

You can also plow out a space for your garbage bin, clear snow off the street in front of your mailbox, and clear the snow from around the fire hydrants near you, to keep these things easily accessible and help prevent them from being damaged.

For more information visit:

* muskegoncountyroads.org "About Us" dropdown menu, Winter Operations Guidelines PDF

** muskegoncountyroads.org "About Us" dropdown menu, History PDF, pages 12-13



A Muskegon County Road Commission snow plow is hard at work for Fruitport Township residents. Photo by Collin Holtrop.

**Sometimes I talk to myself.
Then we both laugh and laugh.**

from a t-shirt

Science has shown that laughter is good for you.