



Q&A on Winter Services

You say your first priority is ‘primary routes’ – what does this mean?

Roads are treated on a priority basis: primary, secondary and other roads.

Primary Road Network

These roads are treated on a Precautionary Salting basis

All ‘A’, ‘B’ and some C classified roads, main distributor roads; main roads in the vicinity of schools; access roads to hospitals, ambulance depots, main police stations and fire stations, and main bus routes. Other main roads steeper than 1 in 10 gradient (10%) and roads that are of local or national importance for the delivery of essential services.

Where severe weather conditions are predicted these roads will be pre-salted and this will normally be carried out before the morning peak. Depending on weather conditions this could also involve an evening pre-salt. Where severe conditions such as snow persist, resources will remain concentrated on these roads.

Secondary Road Network

These are treated on a Post Salting basis, except as described for schools.

Secondary distributor roads; access to isolated villages and rural communities; a main access road to each school; rural through routes not included above; spine roads into residential and industrial areas. Residential areas with road gradients steeper than 1 in 12.5 (8%) where specific difficulties have been identified and where it is practical to do so.

Secondary roads will be post treated, to be actioned when severe weather conditions are likely to persist for a significant period beyond the completion of the precautionary salting routes (e.g. when temperatures are forecast as sub-zero to extend beyond 12 noon). In order to improve travel to school, secondary roads will be pre-treated, in advance of school days, during the above mentioned weather conditions when resources are available.

Other Roads

These are treated on a Post Salting basis.

On the satisfactory completion of post salting of the abovementioned roads and if severe weather conditions persist, the remaining road network will be treated on a reactive basis. Treatment will be dependent on resources and changing weather conditions. Depending on weather conditions, treatment of the remaining network may take several days from onset of severe weather as priority will be given to, and concentrated on the above stated road hierarchy.

Post salting will only be undertaken if severe weather conditions are likely to persist for a significant period beyond the completion of the precautionary salting routes (where temperatures are forecast as sub-zero to extend beyond 12 noon). Post salting operations will normally be undertaken out with the morning peak. During a period of prolonged severe weather conditions forecast to last longer than 7 days, blue light enquiries will be prioritised and priorities will also take into account funerals, weddings, births and anyone requiring immediate hospital treatment (the council will coordinate this element of operations with NHS Lanarkshire). Reactive squads will also prioritise special needs schools, cemeteries, council sheltered housing and ice on ponds.

Snow Clearing Operations

Following the onset of heavy snowfalls the maximum available fleet of ploughing vehicles will be utilised. These operations will continue whilst snow is still falling with resources targeted to keep arterial routes open. After snow has stopped falling but is still lying, routes will be treated in line with salting priorities as resources permit. During prolonged events forecast to last more than 7 days additional resources supplied by Land Management will be deployed.

Patrolling

When marginal forecasts predict temperatures approaching but not expected to dip below zero degrees and when forecasters are low in confidence about their predictions, patrolling takes place. This operation is principally to check what the actual road conditions are on the network. A representative sample of the network will be patrolled to identify if a full pre-cautionary grit is necessary.

Footways, footpaths and cycle routes are also treated on a priority basis:

Primary Network

Treated on a Precautionary Salting basis

Urban Shopping areas, precincts and main pedestrian Routes remote from carriageways which link major residential /commercial / industrial / educational facilities.

Secondary Network

Treated on a Post Salting basis

Footways and Footpaths not covered above and cycle routes

How do I know if my street is on a primary route?

You can find a list of our salting routes on our web site at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/winter

Why can't you salt more of the roads?

We don't have the resources to treat all roads across North Lanarkshire so we prioritise the most important.

Our primary and secondary priority routes cover 57% of our public road network - a total of 920 kilometres. It takes around three hours to treat the primary routes.

As well as our primary routes, we will prioritise emergencies attended by the police, fire and ambulance services.

My street is not salted and it can be difficult to get out on to the main roads – what can I do?

We provide salt bins at locations where residents have asked for them and on streets on a slope – more than 2,300 are in place and refilled on a reactive basis. We would ask residents to use these to keep local paths and streets clear and safe.

This will also help elderly neighbours who might not be able to clear their own paths.

To find out where your nearest salt bin is or to request one, go to our web site at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/winter The public can pick up small quantities of salt to treat their own local streets from our recycling centres at:

- **Airdrie** Lady Anne Crescent
- **Bellshill** Reema Road
- **Coatbridge** Stobcross Street
- **Cumbernauld** Wardpark Road, Wardpark Industrial Estate
- **Shotts** Foundry Road
- **Wishaw** Netherhall Road, Netherton Industrial Estate, Netherton

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How do you decide if and when to salt the roads?

We have experienced and trained staff who use information from specialist weather forecasters to assess the situation and decide on the correct action needed.

Salting is carried out in advance of when ice is predicted to form on road surfaces for primary roads.

If the road temperatures are forecast to drop close to zero degrees, we start precautionary salting of primary routes more than three hours in advance. This ensures that primary routes are pre-salted in advance of ice forming in usual circumstances.

Salting usually takes place at 5.00am as forecasts usually indicate sub zero temperatures before dawn. However, this can vary dependent on the particular forecast.

The weather forecasts we use are based on road temperatures, which can be significantly different than air temperatures, used in media forecasts.

If the road temperature is likely to remain low, the primary route may be re-treated.

Primary footpaths are also salted from 5.00am.

I have school age children – does the council salt around schools?

Education Services employ Mears, our property contractor, and their janitors to clear ice and snow within school grounds.

It is important to note that not all the accesses to schools are treated so parents should take particular care when taking their children to and from school. Our primary routes include main roads in the vicinity of schools, but local streets directly around schools may not be salted.

I need to get to hospital for an appointment or treatment, what do I do?

Anyone who requires health care services, such as attending hospital for dialysis or other treatments, should contact the NHS for assistance. The council cannot respond directly to requests for help in these circumstances.

NHS 24 – 08454 24 24 24
www.nhs24.com

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How does salt work to keep roads clear?

We use rock salt, which looks like light brown gravel, to treat roads and paths.

The salt works to reduce the temperature at which water freezes so it can prevent ice forming on the road surface.

Once it is spread on the road, it needs traffic to assist in freezing conditions, and is effective at temperatures as low as -7 degrees centigrade. It is less effective down to -10 degrees, beyond which it is not effective.

During periods of heavy snow and extreme freezing temperatures, salt has a limited effect. Driving conditions will be particularly difficult if freezing conditions are followed by rain which washes the residual salt off the road surface. Drivers should always drive with care in winter conditions.

Salt residual on dry roads may be effective for a considerable time with out further treatment for hoar frost conditions.

If we have a bad winter, what will the council do to keep roads and paths clear?

Our contractor Amey have a fleet of 31 vehicles for road salting, each of which can be fitted with snowploughs, and 27 tractors with trailers to spread salt on footpaths, which can also have snowploughs fitted. Amey also have other equipment that can be used for salting and snow clearing, if needed.

If we need extra resources, we can use our 20 mini tractors with salting hoppers, 13 self propelled grass cutters adapted to plough snow and a number of turbo salt spreading wheel barrows. The council uses this equipment to prioritise resources to salt and clear pavements around special educational needs schools, sheltered housing complexes and cemeteries as well as addressing ice on ponds.

In the event of extreme weather conditions, we can bring in resources and equipment supplied by private contractors.

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