October 12, 2026

Get Ready for Winter Road Maintenance

Copyright Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Current as of: 11/11/2026



How does a town decide which roads to plow in the wintertime? Are there certain roads the law requires towns to plow? Is there a process towns are supposed to follow to make these decisions?

Whether a town road must be plowed depends upon its classification. A town must keep its class 1 highways "in good and sufficient repair during all seasons of the year." 19 V.S.A. §§ 310(a), 302(a)(3)(B). Accordingly, class 1 highways must be plowed and maintained through the winter.

On the other hand, a town may maintain its class 4 highways "to the extent required by the necessity of the town [or] the public good and the convenience of the inhabitants of the town." 19 V.S.A. § 310(b). As such, a selectboard may decide which, if any, of the town's class 4 roads will be plowed during the winter. The Municipal Assistance Center (MAC) recommends adopting a class 4 road policy that lists which, if any, class 4 roads will be plowed in the winter, such as our model at Model Class 4 Highway Policy | Vermont League of Cities and Towns(opens in a new tab).

When it comes to the town's class 2 and class 3 highways, the selectboard has some discretion over whether to provide winter maintenance. However, exercising this discretion must be based upon "safety considerations for the traveling public and municipal employees." 19 V.S.A. §§ 302, 310(a). The process for making this decision is

Copyright Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Current as of: 11/11/2026

prescribed by state law, which we explain in detail in our “Limiting Winter Town Highway Maintenance Info Sheet” available at Limiting Winter Highway Maintenance | Vermont League of Cities and Towns(opens in a new tab).

Copyright Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Current as of: 11/11/2026