



SNOW REMOVAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This brochure provides information on snow removal, the PMC snow removal policy, contact information, and winter weather preparedness tips.

Snow is a mixed blessing: It provides residents and visitors the opportunity for winter sports and recreational activities, but it is costly to remove the accumulated snow and keep our maintained roads safe. The snow removal is provided by PMC staff comprised of both permanent and extra hire employees. The State (Caltrans) provides snow removal services on Mil Potrero and other State Highways.

Some winters are more severe than others, so residents and visitors need to be prepared to ensure personal safety and to keep our roads open and safe.

The PMC staff monitors weather conditions daily. An inclement weather procedure is in place to mobilize and deploy crews to plow PMC roads during snow storms and throughout the clean-up process.

For further information on PMC roads contact the Business Office during regular business hours at (661) 242-3788.

DO I NEED CHAINS?

Yes. Everyone should keep a set of chains with them, even if you have a 4-wheel drive vehicle. CHP does require that vehicles carry chains or traction control devices in order to access the mountain community roads when there is snow and ice on the ground. Cal-Trans normally has signs posted to notify drivers and enforce safety. It is the driver's responsibility to insure the proper installation and maintenance of tire chains or traction control devices when necessary to prevent loss of traction. Loss of traction is defined as the inability of a vehicle to stop, turn, and proceed forward or backward in a sustained, controlled manner without skidding, sliding or becoming stuck.

WHAT CONSTITUTES LEGAL SNOW TIRES?

To be legal SNOW TIRES must have a minimum of 6/32 inch (3/16") of tread. Refer to Section 27465 Motor Vehicle Code. Check your tires for your safety as this is about 1/2 of new tread depth on many tires. Section 27460 of the California Motor Vehicle Code requires, in part, that no person shall use snowtires on four-wheel drive vehicles in place of tire traction devices (i.e. chains) whenever weather and roadway conditions at the time are such that the stopping, traction and cornering abilities of the tires are not adequate. Four-wheel Drive Vehicles with snow tires are not the "end-all" to your safety, at times you may need to use chains.

IS PMCPOA RESPONSIBLE FOR CLEARING AWAY MY BERM?

No. PMCPOA is not responsible for berm removal. PMCPOA does offer a courtesy snow berm removal from driveways to citizens who are physically challenged or senior citizens (Ages 60 & older). The removal is considered to be a non-emergency task and will be completed at the end of the snowstorm, when all association roads are cleared and cindering has taken place. This means it could be two or more days before the crew can begin to remove berms. An application (copy of a current ADA placard identification card/receipt and/or current driver's license) must be on file with PMC and those requesting this service must meet the requirements. PMC policy provides that driveway berms will only be plowed after a storm and NOT on overtime ("Overtime" will include weekends and holidays). The plow operators are unable to turn the blades to avoid leaving a berm all along the plow route, regardless of driveways. Snow removal will normally be plowed to the side of the road wherein the wind will not blow the snow across the road causing melting ice. Between storms the snowplows have to continue to push the snow back to make room for accumulations from subsequent storms. Otherwise, the travel lanes will become dangerously narrow.

CAN I EXPECT MY DRIVEWAY TO BE FREE OF SNOW?

No. We suggest that you consider purchasing a snow blower in addition to contracting with a snow removal service if you want the security of knowing that you can get in and out of your driveway at any given time. Unfortunately, some homes have been built without seriously considering winter access. Though PMCPOA will do all it can to maintain access to and from your home, it cannot be responsible for the lack of accessibility due to steep up sloping or down sloping driveways, or accessibility problems caused by vehicles not well suited for winter conditions, unfamiliarity with winter driving, etc. PMCPOA suggests that homeowners with difficult driveways or driveways that have poor sun exposure or are susceptible to icing maintain a 5-gallon bucket of cinder or kitty litter in their garage.

CAN YOU CLEAR MY ROAD IF IT IS ICY AND SHOULD I PUT CHAINS ON FOR THE SHORT DISTANCE I NEED TO TRAVEL?

Yes. PMCPOA does cinder all of the Pine Mountain Club governed roads as needed and *we still recommend that you put chains on your vehicle*. Conditions can change as the storm progresses and even then you are still responsible for your own safety. You are responsible for safely maintaining as much traction on the road as possible, by having chains, 4-wheel drive or using other means, like snow tires and studs. We caution all of our members and staff to drive slowly.

CAN YOU PLOW THE ROAD SO THAT I CAN LEAVE HOME EARLY IN THE MORNING? (i.e. FOR A DOCTOR'S/DENTIST APPT., AIRPORT, FAMILY TRIP, GOING TO WORK...etc.)

No. We will plow your residential street if you have a *legitimate emergency* (threat to life, health or property). Do not take chances in severe weather conditions! Monitor the weather forecast via TV, telephone, radio or internet. Be aware of your vehicle's capabilities and limitations. Roads will be plowed in the order that affords the greatest benefit for the most residents. This means major roads and school bus routes will be plowed first. Top priorities for cindering and plowing are: 1) Main thoroughfares, 2) Access roads, 3) Cul-de-sacs, 4) Easements and 5) Berms (as time permits). Cindering doesn't take place until after the snowfall stops due to the fact that the cinder will just be covered up by the snow. If a significant snowfall has or is occurring, this may be delayed. At times some flexibility is required to this plan due to the amount of snowfall or equipment break down. When a snow and ice event continues, routes depending on priority are continually monitored. Some roadways may require plowing several times during a storm event. Therefore some routes may not be plowed and/or treated until first priority routes are treated, depending on the severity of the event.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CLEARING SNOW ON MIL POTRERO HIGHWAY? Kern County Roads is responsible for clearing snow on Mil Potrero Highway, while PMCPOA is responsible for clearing snow on Mil Potrero Frontage Rds.

WHAT IS PMC'S PROCEDURE FOR ROAD CLOSURES?

If at any time it becomes necessary to close any road or portions thereof due to extreme snowfall and/or hazardous conditions, we will notify the CHP, Sheriff's Office, fire departments, the school, and we will attempt to notify persons living along the road.

WHO BEGINS A SNOW REMOVAL OPERATION AND WHAT IS YOUR POLICY ON ANY SMOV REMOVAL DAMAGE? Patrol and/or the Director of Operations, decide when conditions warrant the commencement of snow removal operations. PMCPOA is not responsible for chain marks, scratches or gouges resulting from normal snow removal operations, nor will it be responsible for driveway damage resulting from poor construction, driveways that sink due to a saturated base or poor compaction.

CAN YOU TAKE MY ROAD OFF YOUR SNOW CLEARING PROGRAM? No. We do have an obligation to all PMC residents who may travel any road.

CAN PMCPOA HELP ME GET MY VEHICLE OUT IF IT IS STUCK? No. PMCPOA Staff, Maintenance or Patrol cannot at any time push, tow, pull or move any motorized vehicles off roads, stuck in snow or ice, broken down, or that are obstructing traffic. CHP will assist you with those issues. Vehicles left on the road will be towed at owner's expense.

WHAT SHOULD I NOT DO IN PLANNING FOR A SNOW STORM?

- Do not park vehicles on roadways or along the edge of roadways. Vehicles blocking snow removal operations will be towed at owner's expense.
- Do not play, ski, toboggan, sled or snowmobile on roadways, snow berms or along roadway edges. Cars, trucks and snowplows cannot stop quickly on snow and ice.
- Do not allow children and pets to play on roadways, in snow berms or along edges.
- Do not park in restricted areas of PMC Parking Lots.

Parking is not permitted on PMC Roads. If you do not have adequate on-site parking that is well out of the way of snow clearing activities, consider carpooling or shuttling your guests in from a public parking lot. Vehicles left on the road will be towed at owner's expense.

WHAT CAN I DO IN PLANNING FOR A SNOW STORM AND WHAT BASIC SUPPLIES SHOULD I KEEP IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY?
Plan ahead, Be prepared . . .

- Get an early start and don't travel if you don't have to. You may want to postpone noncritical errands until after the storm ends or another day.
- Call for road condition information before you leave.
- Carry an emergency kit consisting of tire chains or cables, blankets, tow strap, jumper cables, flashlight, water, first aid kit, ice scraper, extra clothing, tools, sleeping bag
- Keep the gas tank at least half full
- When traveling, let someone know your intended route and expected time of arrival.
- Winterize your vehicle (antifreeze, wipers, battery, snow tires)
- Please caution your children not to play in the streets or on the snow berms as this is very dangerous. Explain to your children that drivers may not see them or be able to stop in time to avoid hitting them.
- Make sure that your snow tires are in good condition. Remember 6/32 inch minimum.
- Always carry chains, we will at times be posting signs requiring (R-1) chains or snow tires or (R-2) two-wheel drive with chains or four-wheel drive with legal snow tires. These signs, when posted, are for your safety. Please obey them. Chains may also be required on four-wheel drive vehicles pursuant to Motor Vehicle Code Section 27469.
- Do not shovel or put snow from driveways in the roadway as this creates a hazard for other drivers, a liability for you, and is illegal.
- Snow plows make frequent stops and backup maneuvers. Do not drive your car up behind a snow plow as the driver may be unable to see you and inadvertently back into your car. If you are behind a plow that stops, stop your vehicle in such a way that your car looks into the driver's outside rearview mirror and please give them extra room.
- Always have on hand: Non-perishable food and water for a minimum of five days, first aid kit and extra supply of medication, personal hygiene supplies, extra clothing, gloves, footwear, blankets, sleeping bags, food for pets and livestock, flashlight, extra batteries and a battery operated radio, NOAA Weather radio, avoid using candles—Alternate heat source (kerosene, wood, etc.), full propane tank (if applicable), An extra set of car keys, cash, credit cards, snow shovels, cat litter for traction, an emergency procedure plan for the entire family. Practice before an emergency!