

# SNOW REMOVAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## 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 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 snow tires 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. 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 & receipt or Doctor's Note) 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. 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.** You may want to consider purchasing a snow blower and/or 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. PMCPOA 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 CINDER MY ROAD IF IT IS ICY AND SHOULD I PUT CHAINS ON FOR THE SHORT DISTANCE I NEED TO TRAVEL?

**Yes.** PMCPOA does cinder the Pine Mountain Club governed roads as needed and we still recommend that you put chains on your vehicle. 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 with caution in inclement weather.

### **CAN YOU PLOW THE ROAD SO THAT I CAN LEAVE HOME EARLY IN THE MORNING? (i.e. FOR A DOCTORS/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 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 Mil Potrero Highway, PMCPOA is responsible for clearing Mil Potrero Frontage Roads.

### **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 SNOW REMOVAL DAMAGE?** The General Manager and or the Maintenance Operations Manager, 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. PMCPOA is also not responsible for any improvements that are built or placed in the easement along the roadway.

**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 SHOULDN'T I DO IN 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 SHOULD 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. (See links on website.)

- 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)
- Do not allow your children not to play in the streets or on the snow berms. This is very dangerous. 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, at times signs requiring (R-1) chains or snow tires or (R-2) two-wheel drive with chains or four-wheel drive with legal snow tires will be posted. 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 27459.
- 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.
- Have a wired simple phone, not cordless as they will not work in a power outage.
- Practice before an emergency!

#### **WHAT DO I DO IF I'M TRAPPED IN MY CAR DURING A WINTER STORM?**

- Stay in the car. Do not leave the car to look for help unless help is visible within 100 yards. Display a "call for help" sign. Raise the car hood or hang a brightly colored cloth on the antenna to signal for help.
- To keep warm, turn on the car's engine for about 10 minutes each hour. Run the heater and lights only (Avoid running the car battery down)
- Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow
- Open a window slightly for fresh air
- Do light exercise to stay warm
- If you're alone, stay awake as much as possible
- If more than one person is in the car, take turns sleeping, and for warmth, huddle close together.
- Wrap your body and head with extra clothes, blankets, newspapers, maps or removable objects.
- Do not eat snow (lowers your body temperature). If no other water is available, snow can be used for water but it must be boiled to kill germs.

#### **HOW CAN THE RESIDENTS HELP?**

You can assist our employees and equipment operators in several ways.

Post your house numbers (preferable lighted or reflective), visible from both directions. Mount your numbers on a stable post or surface that will not be blocked by snow banks or foliage. Take care that your posted numbers are on your property and not on an easement.

Always park your vehicle off of the street. This will save you a possible ticket, citation and/or towing charge.

Advise your children to ***never play near or in a snow berm near the roadway.***

Do not follow equipment too closely. Please be patient if you are required to wait behind a piece of snow removal equipment.

Make certain that your speed is reasonable for conditions.

Do not flag down or approach snow plows, drivers have extreme difficulty in stopping the vehicle. For further assistance call the Business Office (661) 242-3788 or Patrol Line (661) 242-3857.

Kern County Roads is responsible for clearing snow on Mil Potrero Highway, while PMCPOA is responsible for clearing snow on Mil Potrero FTC.

### **WILL DRIVING OVER THE SNOW TURN IT TO ICE?**

Driving over the snow doesn't create true ice, but merely packs the snow.

### **WOULD IT BE ALL RIGHT IF MY GUESTS PARKED ON THE STREET JUST THIS ONCE?**

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.

Kern County Roads is responsible for clearing snow on Mil Potrero Highway, while PMCPOA is responsible for clearing snow on Mil Potrero FTC.

### **WHY DOES THE PLOW CONTINUE TO PUSH MORE SNOW FROM THE SHOULDERS BACK INTO THE DRIVEWAY WHEN THE STORM IS OVER AND EVERYONE HAS THEIR DRIVEWAY CLEARED?**

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.

### **WHY, WHEN I HAVE JUST FINISHED SHOVELING MY DRIVEWAY, DID THE SNOWPLOW COME BY AND LEAVE A LARGE BERM OF SNOW IN FRONT OF IT?**

The plow operators are unable to turn the blades to avoid leaving a berm all along the plow route, regardless of driveways.

### **WHAT IF I HAVE A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT OR A PLANE TO CATCH OR NEED TO GET TO WORK OR HAVE AN EMERGENCY?**

**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. For instance, how suitable are your vehicle's tires to heavy snow conditions. Does it have high or low ground clearance? Avoid Icy Roads, Use Tire Chains, and check and restock emergency supplies in your car before you leave. PMCPOA's job is to provide you with the most exceptional customer service possible. In emergency situations we will do all we can to help you meet your commitments. Consider rescheduling if possible to avoid travel during severe weather. Consider the possibility that it may be wiser (and safer) to remain a while longer in your warm, dry home rather than becoming stuck in the street and having to wait hours for a tow truck. We encourage homeowners to proceed through any amount of snow that their vehicle can safely handle. However, under some conditions it is wise to remain inside until PMCPOA clears the roadway.

### **WHAT IF I HAVE DIFFICULTY DUE TO MY DRIVEWAY'S STEEP UPSLOPE OR DOWNSLOPE?**

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 driveway, 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.

### **WHAT IS OUR GOAL FOR PMC?**

Our main goal is to provide an expedient and efficient snow removal operation. There are actually two steps implemented to accomplish this. (1) During snowfalls, snow crew concentrate on keeping our main roadways passable for emergency and high volume traffic flows, and...(2) after the snowfall subsides the crews concentrate efforts on clearing snow from all streets for public use as promptly as possible.

### **WHAT IS PMCPOA'S POLICY ON END-OF-THE SEASON PROPERTY REPAIRS?**

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. PMCPOA is also not responsible for any improvements that are built or placed in the easement along the roadway.

## **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.

## **WHAT IS YOUR POLICY ON BERM REMOVAL?**

PMC offers courtesy snow berm removal from driveways to citizens who are physically challenged. 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 that as in years passed, 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 and receipt or doctors note) 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).

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY?**

In case of a private citizen emergency (i.e. fire or medical) requiring snow removal, the Sheriff's Office must be contacted at **911**. If a snow removal operator receives an emergency call from the Sheriff's Office or other emergency responder source, the operator will immediately respond to the emergency. PMCPOA will dispatch a person whenever there is an emergency.

## **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.

## **WHAT TIME WILL YOU BEGIN SNOW REMOVAL AND WHEN ARE STREETS PLOWED?**

Snow removal operations generally begin when snowfall accumulations exceed more than two inches in depth. This begins the operations and snow depth may exceed this in some areas before equipment reaches them. If the snowfall continues, clean up may be delayed until after the snowfall event has subsided. During significant snow storm events our crews are called in to begin operations and remain on duty until the event has subsided or becomes manageable.

## **WHEN ARE STREETS CINDERED AND WHICH STREETS ARE CLEARED FIRST?**

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. 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). 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.

## **WHO BEGINS A SNOW REMOVAL OPERATION?**

Patrol and/or the General Manager decide when conditions warrant the commencement of snow removal operations.

## **WHO DO I CALL IF I NEED MY SNOW BERM REMOVED IMMEDIATELY?**

***If you do have an emergency call 911.*** There are Independent Contractors that do snow removal for a fee. They are listed in the phone book.

## **WHO DO I CALL FOR INFORMATION ON ROAD CONDITIONS IN A SNOW STORM?**

Road Condition Information and Emergency Contacts:

### **Emergency Life Threatening ONLY911**

#### **PMC Weather Report:**

(661) 242-4017

#### **Sheriff:**

(661) 245-3440

#### **Kern County Roads**

(661) 248-6535

#### **CHP Lebec**

(661) 248-6655

#### **CHP Roads**

(800) 427-7623

#### **CHP Traffic Accidents**

(661) 334-3913 or

(661) 864-4444 or Weekends (661) 864-4400

#### **US Forest Service**

(661) 2425-3449

#### **23 News 24 hour Weather Line**

(661) 637-1010

### **IN CONCLUSION:**

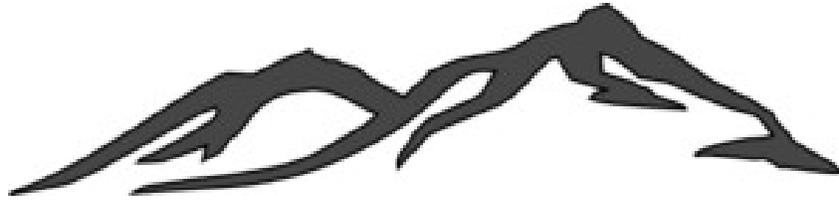
Our Road Crew takes pride in providing the citizens and visitors of PMC with the best snow removal in the area. PMC crews will again be making every effort to provide excellent service while keeping costs as low as is reasonably possible.

If PMCPOA determines that more than two feet of snow has fallen during any one shift in mountainous areas, snow removal operations may be suspended until after the storm has passed. In addition, when conditions become so severe that Road Crews cannot keep up with falling snow, Road Crews may leave the area until such time as it is safe to resume snow removal operations. When it becomes necessary for Road Crews to suspend snow removal activities, the Maintenance Department will attempt to inform the residents of the suspension in snow removal operations as quickly as possible. This may be done by media announcements or email correspondence when possible.

During snowplow operations, every effort will be made to leave as small a berm of snow in front of driveways as possible. Any berm of snow that is left in front of a driveway will become the responsibility of the homeowner or resident to remove. During the cleanup phase, after storms have passed and manpower and equipment become available, the PMCPOA will remove snow berms in front of driveways for the handicap.

All plowing activities shall be performed in compliance with the California Motor Vehicle Code, specifically, Section 34501.2 which says "No operator will be allowed to operate a commercial vehicle (i.e. snowplow truck), more than 12 hours per day or more than 80 hours in any consecutive 8-day period". However, operators may exceed these driver hours of service when directed to do so by law enforcement during the course of an emergency, pursuant to Section 15210 (D) and Section 2800 of the California Motor Vehicle Code.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation. Let's have another safe and enjoyable winter.



Please

***Buckle Up For Safety!***

Enjoy beautiful PMC's Winter Wonderland  
and ***if you have an emergency call 911!***

PMCPOA's Administrative Office Hours

8:00am-5:00pm M-F

8:00am-2:00pm Saturday

Our administrative hours are not related to the operation of our equipment. Our equipment operations are dictated by the weather and will vary from storm to storm