



City of New Bedford  
Office of the Mayor  
Contact: Elizabeth Treadup Pio  
(508) 979-1410  
[etreadup@newbedford-ma.gov](mailto:etreadup@newbedford-ma.gov)

Date: January 12, 2016  
For Immediate Release

City of New Bedford  
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### **City Crews Gear Up to Battle Tough Winter Storms**

#### ***New Equipment, Training and Policies Will Help Bolster Snowstorm Fighting Ability***

**New Bedford, Massachusetts** –How tough will this winter get? No one knows for certain but after experiencing the third snowiest winter on record in New Bedford’s history, city government is gearing up for the next winter storm. The Department of Public Infrastructure (DPI) has acquired new tools and equipment, conducted department wide training, and adopted new policies and procedures—all of which is aimed at strengthening the City’s snowstorm fighting ability.

“Continuous improvement is a core value of New Bedford city government. My administration is committed to making city government more efficient and high performing and DPI’s efforts to improve the city’s ability to recover from winter storms reflect that sentiment,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell.

Heavy snowfall and frigid temperatures plagued the region during the winter months of 2014-2015. More than six and a half feet of snow were dumped on New Bedford, making it the third snowiest winter ever recorded in the city’s history.

“Last winter was the harshest I’ve experienced in my career. At the same time, it was an opportunity to evaluate our operations and equipment and find ways to improve our capacity. We’re making a number of changes this year that will help reduce the City’s recovery period after a snowstorm,” said DPI Commissioner, Ronald Labelle.

The City of New Bedford has implemented a number of improvements to help strengthen its ability to fight severe winter weather including:

- **Replaced aged vehicles and equipment**—The City has adopted a dedicated fleet replacement program which will allow for the annual purchase of replacement vehicles and result in a robust reserve fleet. Since last winter, under this program, New Bedford has instituted lease-purchases for 19 replacement vehicles that were damaged beyond repair. In addition, new vehicles and equipment acquired to date by DPI include two

loaders, one track loader with a 10' snow blower, two utility body pickup trucks, one six-wheel dump truck, two trackless tractors, two one-ton pickup trucks, one gator equipped with a plow and sander, and one pickup truck.

- **Added Magnesium Chloride to Road Treatment Protocol**—This year, DPI will augment its icy road treatment protocol with a liquid magnesium chloride, or “brine” system. Magnesium chloride is used as a pre-wetting agent to catalyze and enhance road salt. The compound is applied to the surface area before it snows and eases the mechanical clearing of snow by helping to prevent hard packed snow from sticking to roadways. With the addition of magnesium chloride to the treatment protocol, the City is expected to use 30% less salt, thereby conserving taxpayer dollars.
- **Installed State-Of-The-Art Sensor System to Monitor Actual Road and Air Temperatures in Real Time**—DPI trucks have been outfitted with a system that monitors and displays air and road temperatures and provides drivers with advance notice of potential road freezing before problems arise.
- **Plan in Place to Help Cover Cost of Excessive Snowfall**—For the first time, the City has purchased an excess snowfall policy for the 2015-2016 season. This policy provides security against major seasonal snowfall by paying the City \$2,500 per inch over 50 inches between November 5<sup>th</sup> and March 30<sup>th</sup>. The policy has a maximum payout of \$125,000, which would occur if seasonal snowfall exceeds 100 inches.
- **Developed and Implemented New Winter Storm Training Program for Employees**—All Department of Public Infrastructure employees have received additional training on snow removal procedures. The training addressed a wide range of issues including safety, equipment maintenance, efficient snow removal methods and the proper application of sand/salt among others. In addition, several supervisors with the department have also earned certificates from the American Public Water Association in Winter Maintenance.
- **Installed New Software to Help City Log, Prioritize, Respond to Service Calls**—New software will help DPI staff better respond to calls for service in the event of winter weather. The software will help staff log, prioritize and dispatch work crews to address the many requests for service staff receive via telephone, e-mail and the See-Click-Fix App.

Along with the above described improvements, DPI has amended the City’s Snow Emergency Parking Ban protocol to expand a double-sided parking ban to several city streets where motor vehicles, school buses and public buses were in many cases unable to navigate these narrow streets in the wake of last winter’s toughest storms. The double-sided parking ban will be expanded to the following areas including:

- Ashley Boulevard (from Nash Road to Coggeshall Street)
- County Street (from Union Street to Sawyer Street)
- Kempton Street (from Rockdale Avenue to Pleasant Street)
- Mill Street (from Rockdale Avenue to Pleasant Street)
- Cottage Street (Union Street to Durfee Street)

In making a determination as to which streets to expand the double-sided parking ban to, the City considered several factors including, 1) the presence of SRTA public bus routes and input from both SRTA riders and SRTA officials, 2) the presence of school bus routes 3) the width of streets 4) the density of the neighborhood. By implementing a double-sided parking ban on these additional streets, crews will be better able to clear snow more effectively and efficiently. (see attached map of double-sided parking ban areas)

###