



CITY OF MUSCATINE
215 SYCAMORE STREET
MUSCATINE, IA 52761
PH. (563) 264-1550 • FAX (563) 264-0750

CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

For more information contact:

Kevin Jenison
Public Information Officer/Communication Manager
City of Muscatine, Iowa
E-Mail: kjenison@muscatineiowa.gov
Phone: (563) 264-1550 • Fax: (563) 264-0750

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BRINE MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN SNOW REMOVAL OPERATIONS

Parks and Rec keeps trails cleared while Public Works battles to keep streets safe

MUSCATINE, Iowa – The battle to contain and remove the accumulated snowfall from the latest winter storm continues in Muscatine with unofficial reports that the area received 8.6-inches of snow through midday Tuesday (Jan. 26, 2021).

“It certainly did not come as hard and as fast as the previous storm did,” Brian Stineman, Public Works Director, said. “And that worked to our advantage.”

Stineman noted that the hard work and long hours of City staff have led to the successful implementation and operation of snow removal with this storm.

“I would like to express my gratitude to our snow plowing staff,” Stineman said. “We have crews working 24 hours a day to clear the roadways for the public and in my opinion they are doing an excellent job.”

Snow fighting began Monday morning with a preemptive strike against Mother Nature as Department of Public Works (DPW) crews applied brine to the hills on various city streets and the bridge decks.

“Using our new equipment we were able to make and apply brine,” Stineman said.



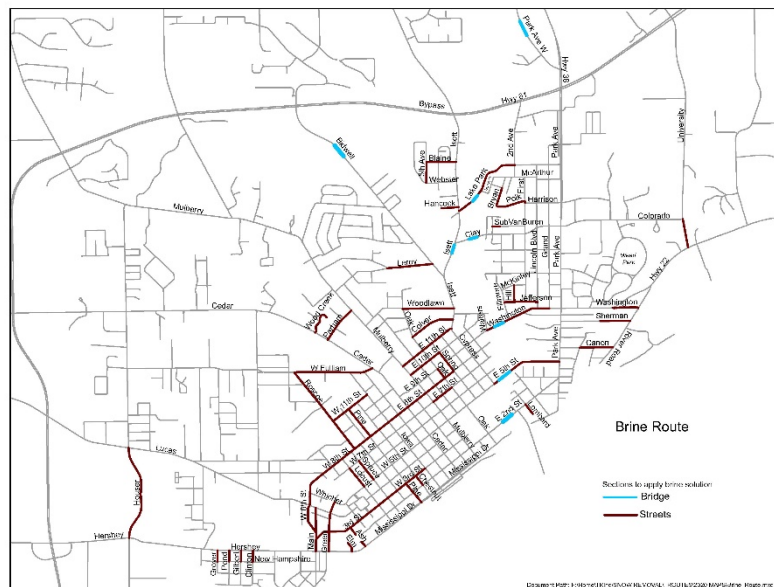
The brine is mixed and stored using equipment at the East Hill Facility on Lake Park Boulevard. That equipment was inherited by the City when they purchased the former Iowa Department of Transportation complex. The City purchased a Liquid Application, Anti-Icing Spreader System in June 2020 that slides into a tandem axle truck. The brine is

pumped into the spreader tanks on the truck and used to pre-wet bridges, hills, intersections, and other problem areas that could potential ice up and create dangerous conditions.

“We have used this brine system for the last couple of storms,” Randy Howell, Street Maintenance Supervisor, said. “Each time we have learned a little bit more on the right mixture and application of the brine. The success we had this time is the culmination of that learning curve.”

The areas where the brine was applied is indicated on the attached [map](#).

“This effort greatly reduced the salt needed to maintain these areas and allowed for much easier removal of snow,” Stineman said. “The brine application also greatly increased our efficiency and reduced the time to plow those areas.”



While Public Works has made great strides in clearing the streets and parking lots, Parks and Recreation also has a part in snow removal operations including the clearing of the Muscatine trail system and city parks.



“All the trails are clear at this time,” Richard Klimes, Parks and Recreation Director, said. “However, that may change with the potential for blowing and drifting snow during the overnight hours Tuesday into Wednesday.”

Tuesday’s slightly warmer temperatures allowed for some snow melt, which combined with the potential for more drifting and blowing of snow this evening along with colder temperatures, could present additional travel hazards Wednesday morning.

Drivers and pedestrians are urged to continue to use caution when moving about the community and especially for icy conditions Wednesday morning.

Snow began accumulating during the late afternoon hours on Monday and DPW crews responded by initiating plow operations while concentrating on keeping emergency routes open. Those efforts continued all night and into Tuesday morning due to the amount of snow accumulated along with the blowing and drifting that occurred during the overnight hours.

At this time most trucks are beginning to move into residential areas and are “opening up” streets by plowing the center line so that vehicles can move more easily to the cleared main routes.

Once all the streets are “open” crews will begin to push snow back to the curb in residential areas.

“This should begin later this evening and will continue into and through tomorrow,” Stineman said.

Crews will move into alleys and begin plowing them once all residential streets are pushed back to the curb, but Stineman does not anticipate getting to the alleys until Thursday.

““We should be completely done with this event by the end of the day on Friday just in time for the next predicted storm,” Stineman said.

Meanwhile, the City’s contracted snow removal company will begin removing snow from city parking lots and will remove snow from the Central Business District Wednesday night.

“I am very pleased with the outcome of the brine routes,” Stineman said. “The streets that received brine are almost completely bare to the pavement. This is an exciting tool that we now have and we look forward to using it more often and expanding the use of it where appropriate.”

The City continues to encourage residents to park off-street whenever possible.

“We understand that not everyone has access to off-street parking spaces so there are always cars that must be plowed around,” Stineman said. “From what I could tell by driving around town this morning our messaging wasn’t too successful. I still saw many cars that were parked on-street and many of those had been plowed in because there is nowhere for the snow to go.”

If people have concerns about snow removal they can contact the Public Works Department at 563-263-8933 or, new for this storm and the rest of winter, residents can email Public Works at snowrequest@muscatineiowa.gov with their questions and/or concerns about the snow removal operations.