

# Connecticut's Winter Operations:

Information on how public works agencies in Connecticut handle winter maintenance issues.

This document was created from information gathered at the *Roundtable on Winter Maintenance Issues* held on October 19, 2005 in Hartford, CT as part of the CT Technology Transfer Center's Road Scholar Program. All information was voluntarily submitted by the towns and agencies that participated.

## Discussion Highlights

The following is documentation created from the discussions held during the *Roundtable Discussion on Winter Maintenance Issues* held on October 19, 2005 in Hartford. More than 40 municipal and state representatives came together to discuss topics specific to road maintenance during winter weather. The following are highlights from the discussions. These topics originated from questions that were submitted during the registration process.

1. The use of outside assistance (contractors) for snow removal operations: Contract issues, policies, logistical issues.

The Town of Orange uses contractors. They go out to bid with a maximum hourly rate of \$175. They provide the sand and change the blades on contractor plows. They also guarantee \$2500 to the contractor for the season. The guarantee goes toward the first storm.

The State of CT pays \$135 per hour for its contractors truck and \$15.00 for the sander. The DOT supplies the salt and sand. The contractor is responsible for all maintenance of his own equipment. The state only uses contractors after all of their employees are engaged in the storm. As soon as the storm staffing is cut back, the contractors are the first to go. They use contractors for roads as well as parking lots and rest areas. Those clearing the lots are paid less than those clearing roadways. DOT inspects all contractor work regularly. The DOT guarantees a certain dollar amount as long as the contractor is on the contract, or supplement contract and has been accepted by the State by an complete inspection of the truck being used, and the contractors insurance is in place within 15 calendar days of the inspection date. This guarantee is only for vehicles with 32,000 GVW and above.

West Hartford guarantees a minimum as well. Their contractors are on call. The town does the sanding and they supply the contractors with radios so that they can communicate during the storm.

Westport is looking at using a fuel surcharge for their contractors to deal with the rising fuel prices.

The Town of Woodbridge does not use contractors. They do it all themselves.

Bloomfield does all their own plowing as well.

East Haddam pays different amounts to their contractors based on the equipment they have.

2. How do towns deal with rest breaks: do they send staff home? How do they handle supervisory staff? Do public works staff fall under guidelines of “federal hours of service”?

The towns of Bloomfield and Westport do not send people home. They rest people but the amount of rest depends on the storm. They are kept on the clock for the duration of the storm.

The State DOT must rest their staff for at least 3 hours after the 17<sup>th</sup> hour of work and before the 21<sup>st</sup> hour. An employee receives pay for this rest break. State employees with a snow and ice assignment are expected to be available between November 1 through April 30<sup>th</sup>. If an employee is called and contact is not made, and this employee observes that weather conditions are impairing highway travel or that hazardous driving is likely to result, he/she will make a completed phone call to his/her assigned work location for instructions whether he/she is to report for work. If the supervisor is absent from his/her office, he/she will assign an authorized spokesperson to speak for him/her. The employee will be expected to follow the instructions he/she receives.

Woodbridge rests staff for 4 hours after 16 hours.

South Windsor sends people home for 6-12 hours at a time and they only pay for the down time if they need to house the staff in a hotel overnight (if storm is too bad to send them home). They use contractors for the rest periods.

Beacon Falls has a contract that they rest the staff after 17 hours but that the town directs the personnel in an emergency so they have some flexibility.

New Britain runs a 12 hour shift and staying longer is not mandatory.

Supervisory staff is mostly on call. If a storm hits, they are the ones to run the storm. Bloomfield has one person who is on call at all times. South Windsor rotates on-call responsibilities on a weekly basis.

There are no specific references to public works in the federal hours of service guidance. They are not specifically exempt and are not listed as needing to follow guidelines. In general, most town legal staff say that, in storms, public works personnel are considered emergency personnel and so fall under exemption that way.

3. Phase II Stormwater Requirements and Alternatives to Sand and Salt: A brief outline was given, highlighting the main requirements. Representatives from the towns then spoke about what they are currently using on the roads in winter operations and if they are moving toward changing these policies and procedures to address Phase II requirements.

Bloomfield has moved to all salt. They also use some Calcium Chloride on main drags and some sand in special situations.

The State DOT uses straight salt to be applied on all multi lane systems ( 432 lbs per 2 lane mile) Straight sand is to be applied on multi lane highways when abrasives are

required (1430 lbs per 2 lane miles) . And a 7-2 mixture (7 parts sand and 2 parts salt mixture) will be the primary mix on all two-lane highways and ramps.

New Milford is going to Ice-B'Gone (an agricultural bi-product).  
Most towns are still using a lot of sand.

<b>Town</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Contact information</b>	<b>Miles of Road</b>	<b>Other Road Information</b>
<b>Bloomfield</b>	David Gofstein	<a href="mailto:dgofstein@bloomfieldct.org">dgofstein@bloomfieldct.org</a>	115	5 miles noncontinuous sidewalks
<b>Bristol</b>	George Wallace		230	
<b>Darien</b>	George Swift		81	
<b>Fairfield</b>	Scott Bartlett	203-256-3176	260	100+ miles of sidewalk
<b>New Britain</b>	Steve Cowperthwaite		170	
<b>New Milford</b>	David Somers	860-355-6045 / d.somers@newmilford.org	233	205 improved / 28 gravel
<b>Orange</b>	Donald Foyer Sr.	203-891-2175	110	
<b>South Windsor</b>	Mel Stead	860-648-6366	134	
<b>West Hartford</b>	Brian Lavoie	860-236-4236	210	10 miles of sidewalk
<b>Westport</b>	Scott Sullivan	203-341-5085	124	75 miles of sidewalks
<b>Windsor Locks</b>	Scott Lappen	860-627-1405 x201 / scottlappen@snet.net	50	3-4miles of sidewalks and 6 municipal lots
<b>Woodbridge</b>	Warren Connors		80	
<b>Woodstock</b>	Dwight Ryniewicz or John Navarro	860-974-0330	125	100 improved / 25 gravel
<b>ConnDOT - Groton</b>	Brian Brouillard	860/536-3541	155	2 lane hwy and secondary roads - includes I-95 in Groton North Stonington

<u>Town</u>	<u>Contact Name</u>	<u>Contact information</u>	<u>Miles of Road</u>	<u>Other Road Information</u>
ConnDOT - District 2	Sherry Ruiz-Clark	<a href="mailto:sherry.ruiz.clark@po.state.ct.us">sherry.ruiz.clark@po.state.ct.us</a>	1520	includes 6 lane, 4 lane, 2 lane, ramps, & state agencies
ConnDOT - Marlborough	Donald Newell	860-295-6160	120	23 miles of 2 lane highway and secondary roads

<b>Town</b>	<b>What Else are You Responsible for?</b>	<b>How Many Plow Routes?</b>	<b>How Many Staff?</b>	<b>Contractors?</b>
<b>Bloomfield</b>	21 town building sidewalks, 7 school parking lots and sidewalks	12 road routes	19(12 for roads - others to properties)	no
<b>Bristol</b>	city buildings and schools	15 sand routes and 30 plow routes		yes
<b>Darien</b>	all municipal parking lots		13	yes
<b>Fairfield</b>			8 managers / 64 staff	yes
<b>New Britain</b>	sidewalks are done by parks dept. and police lots and municipal lots are done by city hall staff and schools are done by board of ed staff	10		
<b>New Milford</b>			27 and 5 mechanics	
<b>Orange</b>	sand school parking lots, parks and Rec dept. does all building walks		12 crew, 4 part time drivers, 8 contractors	yes
<b>South Windsor</b>	sidewalks of town buildings and in front of town owned properties only	19		yes
<b>West Hartford</b>				yes
<b>Westport</b>	board of Education, parks and municipal lots	11	16 Highway/ 2 mechanics	yes
<b>Windsor Locks</b>				no
<b>Woodbridge</b>	all municipal buildings - transfer station and a school. Parks maintains sidewalks of town buildings - board of ed does school walks		11	no
<b>Woodstock</b>	school and town hall	8	9	yes
<b>ConnDOT - Groton</b>	north stonington rest area	10 Plow routes	25 employees / 18 9-tons supervised	yes

<u>Town</u>	<u>What Else are You Responsible for?</u>	<u>How Many Plow Routes?</u>	<u>How Many Staff?</u>	<u>Contractors?</u>
<b>ConnDOT - District 2</b>	roads,lots,state agencies	District wide there is a total of 105 Plow runs with numerous termini and various trucks plowing – including at times, contractors	We require 44 contractor trucks, We have 280 (+/-) truck drivers	yes
<b>ConnDOT - Marlborough</b>	commuter lots			



<b>Town</b>	<b>How are They Used?</b>	<b>Contractor Details</b>	<b>Salt Usage</b>	
<b>Bloomfield</b>			300lb/lane mile	
<b>Bristol</b>	30 contractors used to plow only	contractor rates are \$70-\$103 - 5 different rates depending on equipment		
<b>Darien</b>	RR parking lots			
<b>Fairfield</b>	as needed			
<b>New Britain</b>				
<b>New Milford</b>				
<b>Orange</b>				
<b>South Windsor</b>	6 routes		2000 tons	
<b>West Hartford</b>	plow snow but don't sand		1to1 salt sand mix	
<b>Westport</b>	1 assigned plow route, parking lots & storm clean up		3 to 1 salt to sand	
<b>Windsor Locks</b>				
<b>Woodbridge</b>				
<b>Woodstock</b>	schools and town hall	town supplies salt and sand mix and contractors get paid by the storm		
<b>ConnDOT - Groton</b>	rest areas and after all employees are being used	as soon as staffing gets cut back, contractors are first to go		

<u>Town</u>	<u>How are They Used?</u>	<u>Contractor Details</u>	<u>Salt Usage</u>	
<b>ConnDOT - District 2</b>	44 in total throughout district 2	Contractors pay for replacement blades, fuel. Do not get paid for any rest breaks, or meals.	On Two Lane Highways: 7:2 mix will be applied at the rate of 5 CY per eight mile run and/or at the rate of 1264 pounds of sand and 300 pounds of salt.	Ramps: 5 CY load of 7:2 sand/salt mix in 6 miles of ramp at the rate of 1685 pounds of sand and 400 pounds salt per ramp mile.
<b>ConnDOT - Marlborough</b>			Multi Lane Highways: One truck of an echelon group shall spread a 4 CY load of salt at the rate of 432 pounds per tow-lane mile to the entire run (20 effective two-lane miles). The other two trucks of the echelon group shall each spread a 5.5 CY load of straight sand on 10 effective two lane miles at the rate of 1430 pounds per two lane mile	Ramps: 5 CY load of 7:2 sand/salt mix in 6 miles of ramp at the rate of 1685 pounds of sand and 400 pounds salt per ramp mile.

<u>Town</u>	<u>Sand Usage</u>	<u>Rest Breaks</u>
<b>Bloomfield</b>	very little	target is 16 on and 4 off
<b>Bristol</b>		no sleep option for drivers - trying to establish a policy
<b>Darien</b>		
<b>Fairfield</b>		
<b>New Britain</b>		
<b>New Milford</b>		
<b>Orange</b>		
<b>South Windsor</b>	3000 cubic yards	
<b>West Hartford</b>		
<b>Westport</b>		
<b>Windsor Locks</b>		
<b>Woodbridge</b>		16 on and 4 off - can result in getting time and a half for 4 hour rest break.
<b>Woodstock</b>		all employees stay until 3:30 next day or until snow stops. They can rest at shop if they need it. Pay for breakfast and dinner breaks..lunch is off clock
<b>ConnDOT - Groton</b>		

<u>Town</u>	<u>Sand Usage</u>	<u>Rest Breaks</u>
<b>ConnDOT - District 2</b>	Multi Lane Highways: One truck of an echelon group shall spread a 4 CY load of salt at the rate of 432 pounds per tow-lane mile to the entire run (20 effective two-lane miles). The other two trucks of the echelon group shall each spread a 5.5 CY load of straight sand on 10 effective two lane miles at the rate of 1430 pounds per two lane mile	Generally some of the employees shall begin the rest period during the 17 <sup>th</sup> hour unless conditions dictate otherwise. No employee shall be required to work more than 21 consecutive hours without beginning the rest period. If an eligible employee is released from duty without having received this rest period, he/she shall receive 3 hours of pay. If and eligible employee is released from duty with having received the full rest period he/she shall be paid for the remainder of the rest period.
<b>ConnDOT - Marlborough</b>		

<b>Town</b>	<b>Staff Pay Rates</b>	<b>Other Information</b>
<b>Bloomfield</b>		Also use some LiCal - have 3 vehicles equipped
<b>Bristol</b>	drivers get 1 1/2 pay for regular shift following working from 3pm - 7am	
<b>Darien</b>		7-5yd dump trucks/in body sanders, 4-550Fords with sanders, 2 loaders (936 CAT and Volvo L700)
<b>Fairfield</b>		
<b>New Britain</b>		
<b>New Milford</b>		
<b>Orange</b>		
<b>South Windsor</b>		
<b>West Hartford</b>		also use calcium chloride in some areas. Board of Education is responsible for school lots
<b>Westport</b>	Straight time 7-3:30, time and a half after that, except double on Sundays and holidays.	
<b>Windsor Locks</b>		
<b>Woodbridge</b>		
<b>Woodstock</b>	straight time 7-3:30 time and a half for anything else.	
<b>ConnDOT - Groton</b>		

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ConnDOT - District 2		
ConnDOT - Marlborough		