

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 2014

SNOWPLOWING

What a winter - record low temperatures and record snowfall. Carriage Hills also suffered from snowplowing that was definitely substandard and absolutely poor. I received well over 100 emails and phone calls from unhappy homeowners, and I can empathize, because I am one also. Many thought that this year's contract was to a new outfit, where truth is, it was the same one that we have had for 5 years.

Here's how the process works:

- The board sends out requests for bids from 6 to 10 suppliers. The return quotes are evaluated on the basis of cost, reputation and performance. One is selected. In the case of 2014, the contract was for 3 years, 2013-2015.
- All suppliers pretty much work the same way. Based on the contracts they receive, they hire snowplow operators, which are, by and large, freelance agents with blades on their trucks. Obviously, operators are hired on the basis of pay. To change suppliers, as many folks think we should, won't gain us anything, since we have no control over who actually does the plowing, and a different supplier could well have the same operators as the current one. It's a real crap shoot.

The board is currently addressing this year's performance, and debating the best way to make next year's better.

All roads in Wayne County, with the exception of private roads, are the responsibility of Wayne County, not Canton Township. CHHA provides snowplowing, not snow removal, as a SERVICE to the homeowners. It is not required, mandatory or entitled. Therefore, the snowplowing fee is not mandatory. The amount of the fee is determined by the snowplowing cost plus administration divided by the number of homeowners willing to pay. Be assured: If CHHA did not provide snowplowing, it would not get done. About 5% of CHHA homeowners decide not to pay the fee, assuming that those who do will carry them and they would get the benefit for free. If enough homeowners choose not to pay, on a street-by-street basis, snowplowing will be cancelled.

The terms of our contract are:

- The trucks do not come out until after it has stopped snowing.
- The trucks do not come out for snowfalls less than 2 inches from a single snowfall during a 24 hour period.
- Plowing of streets is guaranteed within 24 hours after it has stopped snowing. Streets are cleared first, then cul-de-sacs.
- Clearing driveways is not included. Everyone gets a mound in their driveway, no matter who plows the street. CHHA can provide a list of independent contractors should you wish to have your drive cleared at your expense.
- Five inches or more of snowfall is considered a snow emergency and plowing may be delayed. Plowing will be completed as expediently as possible. Cars parked on the street during a snow emergency are subject to a citation.
- Every effort will be made in courts and cul-de-sacs to push the snow onto the islands in order to minimize snow banks in driveways and on lawns.
- Sod/mailbox/other damage is accountable to the plowing company. Call them direct at 734-455-1350. Contractors must carry property and liability insurance.
- Because of the uneven condition of the streets, plowing is not down to the pavement. The blades are set up to avoid damaging the trucks and the streets.

Final word - if you choose not to pay for snowplowing, don't complain about it.