



## Corporation of the Township of Brock

### Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Ben Kester, CET, CRS-s  
**Position:** Interim Director of Public Works  
**Title / Subject:** Sidewalk Clearing Policy  
**Date of Report:** June 9, 2025  
**Date of Meeting:** July 28, 2025  
**Report No:** 2025-OP-011

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#### 1.0 Issue / Origin

This report responds to Council's request to establish a policy on sidewalk clearing in the winter months.

#### 2.0 Background

Council passed motion C-2024-137 that requested staff put forth a policy on winter sidewalk clearing.

#### 3.0 Analysis

Staff were asked to draft a policy for sidewalk maintenance for winter weather. The Maintenance Standards that every Municipality in Ontario is required to follow for sidewalk maintenance in the winter is as follows:

**Snow Accumulation:** A sidewalk is deemed to be in a state of repair if there is more than or equal to 8 cm of snow on the sidewalk within 48 hours after a snow fall, or within 48 hours after the cancelling of a significant weather event.

**Ice Accumulation (Ice storms or freezing rain events):** If the probability of ice formation is high the Municipality shall pretreat the sidewalks prior to the ice event and the sidewalk is deemed to be in a state of repair for 48 hours after the application of de-icing materials. The standard for treating icy sidewalks once the Municipality becomes aware of the icy sidewalk is to treat the sidewalk within 48 hours.

An issue that often occurs is that the snow on the sidewalk does not melt and becomes packed on the sidewalk and often turns to ice as the snow gets packed down.

#### **4.0 Related Policies / Procedures**

O. Reg. 239/02 Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways.

#### **5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment**

Treating icy sidewalks is best done with straight salt. It is the most efficient when it comes to not having to apply de-icing agents two or 3 times until the ice finally melts. If the policy is passed it will have budget implications and will be discussed during 2026 budget discussions.

##### **5.1 Asset Management**

N/A

#### **6.0 Climate Change Impacts**

Using straight salt as a de-icing agent will reduce the need for 2 or 3 applications of sand/salt mixture and by reducing the times that de-icing agent must be applied will also reduce green house gas emissions. Using straight salt is not something the Township has done in the past, however, in staff's opinion using straight salt will improve the accessibility of all the Township's sidewalks in the winter.

#### **7.0 Communications**

A communications plan will be developed if Council approves the use of straight salt on sidewalks and if requested by Council.

#### **8.0 Conclusion**

It is in the best interest of the Municipality and our residents to keep our sidewalks clear, safe and accessible all year. It is staff's opinion that the minimum maintenance standards, which the Township is required to follow, is sufficient as it outlines the duties required and helps to protect the Township from liability. As such, it is staff's opinion that a separate sidewalk clearing policy is not required, provided the Township continues to follow the minimum maintenance standards.

#### **9.0 Recommendation**

That report number 2025-OP-011, Sidewalk Clearing Policy, be received for information and;

That Council confirm that Staff are to use straight salt while performing winter maintenance on sidewalks, subject to 2026 budget approval; and

That staff are to continue to perform winter maintenance on sidewalks in accordance with Minimum Maintenance Standards (as amended for time to time).