

Township Road Maintenance Policy

Long Lake Township, Crow Wing County, MN

Overview

This policy establishes standards for the maintenance of approximately **5.6 miles of paved roads** and **22.5 miles of gravel roads** under township jurisdiction. The goal is to provide **safe and passable roads**, recognizing rural conditions, budget constraints, and typical Minnesota weather patterns.

Section 1: Winter Road Maintenance

General Philosophy

- The township does **not maintain a “bare road” policy** in winter.
- Roads will be maintained to achieve **safe, passable driving conditions**, not dry pavement.
- Snow and ice conditions should be expected during winter months.

Snow Plowing Operations

Plowing Trigger

- **Automatic plowing will occur when snowfall reaches 3 inches or more.**

Plowing Priorities

1. Main through roads and school bus routes
2. Secondary roads
3. Low-traffic roads

Timing

- Snow removal typically begins **after snowfall ends** or when accumulation reaches trigger depth.
 - During prolonged storms, operators may begin earlier at their discretion.
 - Roads may take **several hours after a storm ends** to be fully cleared.
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Snowfall Less Than 3 Inches: Removal Criteria

Snowfalls under 3 inches **may be plowed** based on the following conditions:

- **Drifting Snow:** Significant drifting that creates impassable or hazardous conditions
 - **Ice Formation:** Moisture or compaction leading to icy surfaces, especially on hills, curves, or intersections
 - **Traffic Safety Concerns:** High-traffic areas, school bus routes, or known problem locations becoming unsafe
 - **Successive Snow Events:** Multiple small snowfalls accumulating beyond manageable levels
 - **Temperature Changes:** Melting and refreezing creating hazardous driving conditions
 - **Emergency Access Needs:** Ensuring access for emergency vehicles
 - **Township Discretion:** Road supervisor based on real-time conditions
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Sanding and Ice Control

- Sanding will be applied at **intersections, hills, curves, and known hazardous areas.**
 - Full-road sanding is **not typical** due to cost and environmental considerations.
 - Salt use is limited and applied primarily on **paved roads at critical locations.**
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Mailboxes and Private Property

- Township is **not responsible for damage to mailboxes** or private property located within the road right-of-way due to normal plowing operations.
 - Snow will not be removed from private driveways.
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Resident Responsibilities

- Residents are prohibited from placing snow onto township roads.
 - Vehicles must be removed from roadways to allow effective plowing.
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Section 2: Summer Road Maintenance

General Philosophy

Summer maintenance focuses on **preserving road surfaces, ensuring drainage, and maintaining safe travel conditions** across both paved and gravel roads.

Gravel Road Maintenance (22.5 miles)

Grading

- Roads will be graded **as needed**, typically:
 - After rain events
 - When washboarding or rutting occurs
- Frequency may vary based on weather and traffic.

Dust Control

- Dust control measures (e.g., chloride application) may be applied:
 - Based on budget availability
 - On high-traffic gravel roads or problem areas

Gravel Replacement

- Gravel will be added periodically to maintain proper road surface and crown upon township approval.
 - Priority given to:
 - Roads with significant erosion
 - High-use routes
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Paved Road Maintenance (5.6 miles)

Crack Sealing

- Performed periodically to extend pavement life and prevent water intrusion.

Patching

- Potholes and surface failures will be repaired as needed.

Seal Coating

- Roads may be seal coated on a **multi-year cycle**, depending on funding and condition.

Drainage and Right-of-Way Maintenance

Ditch Maintenance

- Ditches will be maintained to ensure proper drainage and prevent water damage to roads. Ditches are defined by that portion used by the township i.e. maximum placement of snow.

Culverts

- Culverts under township roads will be inspected and replaced as necessary to maintain water flow.

Vegetation Control

- Mowing will occur **at least once annually**, typically in late summer.
- Additional mowing may occur at intersections and corners to maintain visibility.

Road Closures and Weight Restrictions

- Seasonal weight restrictions may be imposed during spring thaw to prevent road damage.
- Temporary closures may occur due to flooding or construction.

General Provisions

- Road conditions will vary due to weather and usage.
- The township board retains the right to **adjust maintenance practices** based on budget, equipment, and conditions.
- Emergency situations may override standard procedures.

Section 4: Budget-Based Service Levels

General Statement

Road maintenance services are directly dependent on the township's **annual budget, available staffing, equipment condition, and material costs**. Service levels may be adjusted by the township board to remain within fiscal limits while maintaining safe and passable roads.

The township may implement the following service levels:

Level 1: Full Service (Normal Funding Conditions)

Winter Maintenance:

- Plowing triggered at **3 inches or more of snowfall**
- Timely response to drifting and hazardous conditions
- Sanding at intersections, hills, curves, and problem areas
- Consideration of sub-3 inch snow events based on established criteria

Summer Maintenance:

- Regular grading of gravel roads as conditions require
 - Routine dust control applications on priority roads
 - Scheduled gravel replacement and reshaping
 - Crack sealing, patching, and periodic seal coating of paved roads
 - Annual ditch mowing and drainage maintenance
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Level 2: Moderate Service (Constrained Budget)

Winter Maintenance:

- Plowing still triggered at **3 inches**, but with **longer response times**
- Reduced sanding, limited to **highest-risk locations only**
- Less frequent response to drifting unless roads become impassable
- Sub-3 inch snow events addressed **only when safety risks are significant**

Summer Maintenance:

- Reduced grading frequency; may result in rougher gravel surfaces
 - Limited or no dust control except in critical areas
 - Gravel replacement limited to **priority repairs only**
 - Paved road maintenance focused on **essential patching rather than preservation**
 - Reduced mowing frequency (e.g., once per year only)
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Level 3: Minimal Service (Severely Limited Budget or Emergency Conditions)

Winter Maintenance:

- Plowing at **3 inches or greater**, with **delayed response times likely**
- Priority given strictly to **main roads and emergency access routes**
- Minimal sanding, only at the most hazardous locations
- Limited or no response to snowfalls under 3 inches unless roads become impassable

Summer Maintenance:

- Grading performed **only when roads become significantly unsafe or impassable**
- No dust control applications
- Little to no new gravel added except for emergency repairs
- Paved road work limited to **critical safety repairs only**
- Minimal ditch and vegetation maintenance

Emergency or Unusual Conditions

- In cases of **extreme weather, natural disasters, or major equipment failure**, service may temporarily fall below the defined levels.
- The township may utilize **contracted services** if financially feasible and necessary.

Public Communication

- When service levels are reduced, the township will make reasonable efforts to **inform residents** through:
 - Township meetings
 - Website or posted notices (if available)
- Residents should expect **changes in road conditions and response times** during reduced service periods.

Board Authority

- The township board retains full authority to:
 - Determine the appropriate service level annually
 - Adjust service levels as needed throughout the year

- Allocate resources based on changing conditions and priorities

Here's a **single, polished, adoption-ready township road policy** with clear structure and formal tone, excluding the equipment/operator section and incorporating the budget-based service levels.

Township Road Maintenance Policy

Long Lake Township, Crow Wing County, MN

Adopted: [Date]

Section 1: Purpose and Authority

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent and practical standards for the maintenance of township roads under the jurisdiction of [Township Name], located in central Minnesota. The township maintains approximately **5.6 miles of paved roads** and **22.6 miles of gravel roads**.

This policy is adopted by the Township Board to promote **safe and passable road conditions**, while recognizing the limitations of weather, available resources, and budget constraints.

Section 2: Winter Road Maintenance

General Philosophy

The township does **not maintain a bare road policy** during winter months. Roads will be maintained to provide **safe and passable travel conditions**, and residents should expect snow and ice-covered roads during winter weather events.

Snow Plowing Operations

Plowing Trigger

- Snow plowing will **automatically begin when snowfall reaches 3 inches or more**.

Plowing Priorities

Roads will generally be cleared in the following order:

1. Main through roads and school bus routes
2. Secondary township roads
3. Low-volume roads

Timing

- Snow removal operations typically begin **after snowfall has ended** or when accumulation reaches the trigger depth.
 - During extended storms, plowing may occur intermittently at the discretion of the operator or township officials.
 - It may take **several hours after a storm ends** to complete plowing of all township roads.
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Snowfall Less Than 3 Inches

Snowfalls under 3 inches may be plowed when one or more of the following conditions exist:

- Significant **snow drifting** causing hazardous or impassable conditions
 - **Ice formation** due to compaction, melting, or refreezing
 - Safety concerns on **hills, curves, intersections, or high-traffic routes**
 - **Successive small snow events** resulting in accumulated buildup
 - **Temperature fluctuations** creating slippery conditions
 - Need to maintain **emergency vehicle access**
 - Determination by the township board, road supervisor, or operator based on **actual road conditions**
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Sanding and Ice Control

- Sanding will be applied primarily at **intersections, hills, curves, and other hazardous areas**.
 - Full-road sanding is not typical due to cost and environmental considerations.
 - Salt may be used sparingly, primarily on **paved roads in critical areas**.
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Mailboxes and Private Property

- The township is not responsible for damage to mailboxes or private property located within the road right-of-way caused by normal snow removal operations.
- The township will not remove snow from private driveways or approaches.

Resident Responsibilities

- Residents shall not place snow onto township roads.
- Vehicles must be removed from roadways to allow safe and effective snow removal.

Section 3: Summer Road Maintenance

General Philosophy

Summer maintenance is focused on preserving road infrastructure, maintaining proper drainage, and providing safe driving conditions.

Gravel Road Maintenance (22.6 miles)

Grading

- Gravel roads will be graded **as needed**, based on weather and road conditions.
- Grading typically occurs after rain events or when washboarding, rutting, or potholes develop.

Dust Control

- Dust control measures may be applied on selected roads based on **traffic volume, need, and available funding**.

Gravel Replacement

- Gravel will be added periodically to maintain proper road surface, crown, and drainage.
- Priority will be given to roads experiencing **erosion or heavy wear**.

Paved Road Maintenance (5.6 miles)

Patching

- Potholes and surface defects will be repaired as needed to maintain safe travel.

Crack Sealing

- Crack sealing may be performed periodically to extend pavement life.

Seal Coating

- Seal coating may occur on a **multi-year cycle**, depending on road condition and available funding.
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Drainage and Right-of-Way

Ditch Maintenance

- Ditches will be maintained to ensure proper drainage and protect roadway integrity.

Culverts

- Culverts will be inspected and repaired or replaced as necessary.

Vegetation Control

- Roadside mowing will occur **at least once per year**, typically in late summer.
 - Additional mowing may occur at intersections to maintain visibility.
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Seasonal Weight Restrictions

- The township may impose **seasonal load restrictions** during spring thaw to prevent road damage.
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Section 4: Budget-Based Service Levels

General Statement

Road maintenance services are dependent on the township's **annual budget, available resources, and material costs**. The Township Board may adjust service levels as necessary.

Level 1: Full Service (Normal Funding Conditions)

Winter:

- Plowing at 3 inches or more
- Timely response to drifting and hazards
- Sanding at typical priority locations
- Consideration of sub-3 inch events

Summer:

- Regular grading and maintenance
 - Dust control on priority roads
 - Scheduled gravel replacement
 - Ongoing paved road preservation
 - Annual mowing and drainage work
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Level 2: Moderate Service (Constrained Budget)

Winter:

- Plowing at 3 inches with longer response times
- Reduced sanding (priority locations only)
- Limited response to drifting
- Sub-3 inch events addressed only when necessary

Summer:

- Reduced grading frequency
 - Limited dust control
 - Gravel replacement only where needed most
 - Paved road work focused on repairs
 - Reduced mowing frequency
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Level 3: Minimal Service (Severely Limited Budget)

Winter:

- Plowing at 3 inches with delayed response
- Priority given to main routes only
- Minimal sanding
- Limited response to minor snow events

Summer:

- Grading only when roads become unsafe

- No dust control
 - Minimal gravel replacement
 - Paved road repairs only for critical safety issues
 - Minimal vegetation and ditch maintenance
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Emergency Conditions

Service levels may be reduced due to:

- Severe or prolonged weather events
- Equipment failure
- Budgetary emergencies

The township may utilize contracted services if necessary and financially feasible.

Public Communication

The township will make reasonable efforts to inform residents of significant changes in service levels through available communication methods.

Board Authority

The Township Board retains full authority to:

- Establish and modify service levels
 - Allocate resources
 - Interpret and apply this policy
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Section 5: Adoption

This Road Maintenance Policy was adopted by the **Long Lake Township, April 27, 2026**

Chairperson: _____

Clerk: _____

