

# **Foster County Road Department**

**January 16, 2023**

## **General Information:**

Roads in Foster County include state highways, county paved highways, county gravel roads, gravel township roads, city paved and gravel roads, and private drives.

The Foster County Road Department provides maintenance services on county and township roads and portions of the cities of Glenfield, Grace City, McHenry, Barlow and Bordulac.

The City of Carrington Public Works department maintains roads within the city of Carrington.

The North Dakota Department of Transportation provides maintenance services for state highways.

The county road department has a full-time staff of five including the road superintendent. Major equipment includes four motor graders and three snowplow trucks. The county and townships may contract for additional services in extreme conditions.

The Foster County Road Department maintains 91 miles of county paved highways and 21 miles of county rural gravel roads. Questions and concerns regarding policy, levels of service, and route priorities on county roads are directed to the board of county commissioners.

The Foster County Road Department provides maintenance services to townships based on approved annual maintenance agreements. The amount and location of maintenance services is determined by each board of township supervisors and provided to the County Road Superintendent.

Foster County contains 18 organized township and no unorganized townships. There are 577 miles of township gravel roads in Foster County.

Snow removal plans and maps are also provided by each township to the County Road Superintendent annually in November. Bus routes and mail routes are included in the planning process. Concerns or questions regarding level of service and route priorities are directed to the appropriate township supervisors.

The Foster County Road Department provides maintenance services to cities based on annual approved agreements. Concerns or questions regarding level of service and route priorities are directed to city officials.

Townships and cities receiving maintenance services are to designate primary and secondary contacts for timely communication with the road department when necessary to revise service levels.

## Snow Removal Policy:

**POLICY:** It is the policy of the Foster County Road Department to remove snow from county roads safely and quickly, and to provide reasonable ice control while taking into consideration labor, equipment, and funds.

The road department priorities follow a policy that has been approved by the commission with current input from township boards. It is intended to make fair and efficient use of the resources available to the road department. Concerns regarding the priorities under this policy should be directed to the county commission or to the appropriate township board. These calls should not be directed to the road superintendent or blade operators.

The road department needs 3 to 4 days on average to clear roads after a significant snow event. A difficult winter lengthens this process as the snow buildup requires more time to move.

Deviations from the snow removal process will increase the wait time for roads not already cleared.

**HOURS:** Normal work hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm. Additional operations during early mornings, evenings, and weekends, will be at the discretion of the Road Superintendent. Typical hours during and after a storm would be from 5:00 am to 5:00 pm. Exceptions for emergencies will be made by the Road Superintendent or county commission. In the event of a medical emergency, please contact the Sheriff's department or 911.

**WEATHER CONDITIONS:** Equipment will NOT be dispatched when the Road Superintendent judges there to be low visibility or other conditions that would prove a risk to operators and/or to the general public and which could outweigh the benefits. Examples would be extreme wind, snow, fog. In the event of an emergency (fire, police, medical) equipment may be dispatched by the Road Superintendent.

### **ROUTE PRIORITIES:**

1. Top Priority is county highways, cities, county gravel roads, bus routes, and mail routes.

2. Township roads on an alternating/rotating route basis after each snow event that requires snow removal.
3. Any roads that haven't been finished after the above roads.
4. NOTE: As the winter progresses and more snow accumulates the snow removal process will take a greater amount of time. BREAKDOWNS, CONSTANT WIND, CONSTANT SNOW CAN ALSO DETERMINE the LENGTH OF TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE SNOW REMOVAL.

LEVELS OF SERVICE: Foster County does not have bare pavement or bare road policy. On occasion, roads may not be free of snow or ice.

1. Snow/ice removal may be limited to daylight hours, mainly depending on current weather conditions.
2. Snow removal will typically start after 2" of snow on paved roads or 4" on gravel roads.
3. Wind velocity will also be a determining factor for snow removal.
4. Equipment will be dispatched during a snowfall only for emergency situations.
5. Sanding of roads will be done at main intersections, hills, curves, railroad crossings.
6. Sanding will NOT be done with winds over 20 mph as the sand will not stay on the road surface.

MAILBOXES:

1. The County will not repair mailboxes unless ACTUAL contact is made by snow removal equipment.
2. Foster County will not repair mailboxes damaged by snow as it is being removed from the roadway.
3. Mailbox repair will be done by Foster County Road Personnel.
  - a. If mailbox or post is damaged, a new mailbox and post will be installed. Note that the replacement will be a standard metal mailbox and a breakaway post that meets Federal Highway Standards.
  - b. If ground is frozen, a temporary one will be used until Spring.

OBSTRUCTIONS: Obstructions on road right of way such as bales, vehicles, or fencing which might cause snow drifts shall be removed by owner.

1. Hay bales are required to be removed by November 1<sup>st</sup>. After that time the county may remove or burn them.
2. The county shall not be liable for any damages to stalled or stranded vehicles that are on the traveled roadway and hindering snow removal. Owners of said vehicles shall notify the Sheriff's department and move as soon as possible or the vehicle may be towed.
3. Vehicles shall also NOT BE PARKED on the roadway surface or shoulder.

4. Vehicles parked in personal driveways must be parked outside the “clear zone” which is 15-20 feet from the road edge. This is done for safety and to help prevent damage to vehicles.
5. COUNTY VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT ARE NOT ALLOWED TO PULLOUT STUCK/STALLED VEHICLES.

#### PRIVATE ROAD/DRIVEWAYS:

1. The county will not plow private driveways until other roads have been plowed.
2. Normal county snow removal may result in snow being deposited in driveways adjacent to public roads. The County will try to limit the amount of snow placed in driveway, but when snow amounts are heavy naturally more snow will be left in driveway.

#### SNOW PLACED IN ROADWAY:

1. NDCC 24-05-23 and 24-12-02 prohibits obstructing or causing there to be an obstruction on a public highway, road, or road right of way. Snow dumped, plowed, pushed, or blown onto a roadway or road right of way creates a serious hazard for snowplow operators, motorists, and equipment. Piles of snow left on or near a road can freeze into a solid mass creating a hazard for all.
2. Accidents and damages caused by piles of snow piles in roadway may result in liability to property owner.
3. Piles of snow also increase the likelihood of drifts on the road.
4. Property owners found in violation will be given notice and shall remove snow. If they fail to do so in a reasonable time, then the County will do so, and the property owner will be billed.

#### REPORT SIGN DAMAGE:

The traveling public is encouraged to report any road signs that are damaged or deemed missing to the Foster County Road Department as soon as possible. Every attempt will be made to correct the problem. Missing or down STOP signs will always have priority over other signs. We have over 900 signs in Foster County so some signs may take longer to correct the problem. Please call the Road Department at 701-652-5733, or the Foster County Sheriff at 701-652-2251 to report missing signs.