

Department 21 – Winter Control

Overview

Department 21 includes all functions related to the clearing, removal and control of snow and ice from the Township roadways and sidewalks. This budget also provides for most of the costs associated with opening ditches and culverts in the spring throughout the Township to prepare for the spring melt.

The Public Works Department maintains Township roads using its own forces and ensuring that the Minimum Maintenance Standards, as established by Ontario Regulation 239/02 under the Municipal Act and adopted by the Township, are met. These standards establish guidelines for snowplowing, sanding, patrolling and winter sidewalk maintenance. The major objectives for winter operations are:

- To reduce the hazards of icy road conditions to motorists.
- To increase mobility for pedestrians on our sidewalks.
- To facilitate the handling of emergencies by response vehicles.
- To maintain safe passable school bus and winter recreation routes.
- To reduce economic losses to the community and industry.

A contingency reserve is established for winter control to minimize budget impacts should the Township experience higher than normal winter storm events each year.

Revenues

The primary funding source for winter control is through taxation. The levy for winter control comprises approximately 7.5% of the overall net tax levy.

Expenditures

Department 21 shares a portion of the public works overhead from Department 20 to allow for more accurate cost allocations. The budget provides for the estimated costs to accommodate operations for a typical winter season.

Winter weather in the first and last quarters of 2025 were particularly challenging, including many snow, ice and rain events along with the major ice storm experienced in March. This resulted in this Department being well over budget at the end of 2025. The winter control reserve was completely depleted and the Department finished the year with a deficit that is being brought forward into 2026 and funded by OMPF Taxation in this Department is increasing conservatively in order to prepare for future events and to hopefully start re-building the winter control reserve.



Activity Update - Beyond Dollars and Cents

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As part of the 2025 Capital Budget, the Automatic Vehicle Location system was upgraded. This allows for real-time tracking of winter operations, supporting regulatory compliance and customer service.

Severe winter weather is causing significant increases in municipal road expenses, driven by a combination of, increased snow removal frequency, labour, equipment, and material costs. These expenses are exacerbated by climate change, which causes more frequent and intense storms, as well as inflation, which has significantly increased the cost of winter control operations.



