

Winter Parking and Shoveling – A Reminder From The Department of Public Works

The winter season is upon us and it promises to be a snowy one.

It's also time for the Department of Public Works to remind Plumas County residents that they have a legal responsibility to park their vehicles off County Roads and State Highways during and after snowstorms so that snow removal equipment operators can do their job effectively. Vehicles parked on the street make snow removal difficult, and they contribute to the narrowing of traffic lanes - making winter driving tougher on all of us. More than just a big lump in the snow, such vehicles are subject to damage from snow plows (and other vehicles).

Here's the legal stuff: Local Ordinance (Section 4-3.502 of the Plumas County Code) and the California Vehicle Code (CVC 22510) prohibit parking a vehicle on the road or street right-of-way, or in any way hindering snow removal. That means no parking along the pavement, at the end of a street, around a cul-de-sac or on the shoulder of the road during snow season. These are the locations that are needed for snow storage. Sure, you can park on the street short term, but keep in mind that your vehicle needs to be out of the way when the plow truck comes by, and you can't park out there at all if you will be blocking a lane.

If you violate these provisions, you might end up with your vehicle being towed at your expense per CVC 22651 (L), and a citation, which takes up the Department's time and your money, so plan ahead for a winter parking spot. Find a place to park your vehicle off the road right-of-way and make sure you can get to it during snowy conditions. This applies to trailers, boats, RVs and disabled vehicles as well, so it's time to find a place for them, too. The winter parking law also requires the removal of basketball standards, firewood, etc. from the right-of-way. If a snowplow can hit it, it needs to be moved.

Where do you put the snow you are shoveling or plowing from your driveway or sidewalk? One place it doesn't belong is out in the street. The act of dumping snow or other materials on a public right-of-way is a violation of Section 724 of the California Streets and Highways Code, and is a misdemeanor. When Public Works snowplow truck operators attempt to plow through this snow, most of it will become part of the berm in front of your property (or your neighbor's!). What's worse is that the rest of it will stay in the street as an icy, dangerous bump that could contribute to an accident. ***Please keep your snow on your property.*** Obeying winter parking rules makes our job of snow removal job easier, safer and faster. With a shrinking budget, the Public Works Department will have fewer plows out on the roads and needs to be as efficient as it can. Your cooperation will help.

Questions? Telephone the Plumas County Department of Public Works at (530) 283-6268.