



# Clearing sidewalk during winter is **SNOW LAUGHING MATTER**

STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MALGESINI

A group of Stanfield Secondary School basketball players shovel snow at a home on West Coe Avenue in Stanfield. The students decided to do a public service for residents during the heavy, repeated snowfalls of the 2016-17 winter.

EO Media Group

**L**et It Snow" was not written for the benefit of the property owner who has to scoop snow from the sidewalk the next day.

But shoveling the freshly driven snow from the walkway isn't just a winter rite-of-passage, it's the law in two Eastern Oregon cities.

Hermiston and Pendleton both require home and business owners to remove snow from their sidewalks, or face potential consequences.

Hermiston Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan said the city's code requires Hermistonians to remove snow or ice within two hours of the end of snowfall during the day or by 9 a.m. if the snowfall occurred overnight.

Failure to clear the sidewalk could result in a Class A violation, which carries a fine as high as \$2,000 with a presumptive fine of \$435.

Unlike Hermiston, Pendleton doesn't have any hard requirements about when snow is removed.

Pendleton City Attorney Nancy Kerns said a previous ordinance had similar time requirements to Hermiston, but an updated version just generally requires property owners to keep the right-of-way clear of snow and ice.

That doesn't mean an uncleared sidewalk carries no penalties. If damages or injuries occur because of an icy walkway, city law states that the property owner will be held liable.

Pendleton Public Works Director Bob Patterson said a good rule of thumb for Pendleton residents is to clear their sidewalk as soon as possible.



STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MALGESINI

A group of Stanfield Secondary School basketball players shovel snow last winter at a home on West Coe Avenue in Stanfield. The students decided to do a public service for residents during the heavy, repeated snowfalls of the 2016-17 winter.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Fermin Castellon, a cook at Joe's Fiesta, uses a snow shovel to scrape black ice off the sidewalk in front of the restaurant on Main Street in Pendleton.

## RECYCLE

**LOCATIONS:**

- Hermiston:** 220 W. Harper Rd.
- Stanfield:** W. Wood (by Grange Hall)
- Echo:** Across from park (at City Hall)
- Umatilla:** Hwy. 730 (next to Columbia Harvest Foods)
- Umatilla County:**
  - N. Hwy 395 (next to Transfer Station)
  - 81144 N. Hwy. 395
- Irrigon:** 198 W. Columbia Lane
- Boardman:** S.E. Front Street

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STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Smitty's Ace Hardware could not hold on to items like ice melt and snow shovels last winter. At one point, small shakers jugs were all the ice melt left on the shelves after putting a large shipment out due to the persistent winter conditions.

# Concrete care takes shovel, no rock salt

By PHIL WRIGHT  
EO Media Group

Water and oil don't mix, and neither does salt and concrete.

Rock salt, or sodium chloride, is a popular deicer for patios, walkways and driveways. Contractor John Fenton of Pendleton warned against its use on concrete.

"No salt," he said, "salt ruins it."

The chemical is corrosive to concrete, he explained, and can even damage concrete that was mixed, poured, finished and cured properly.

"Concrete undergoes a chemical reaction," he said, "and it cures at 37 days under optimal conditions."

Concrete can be about as impervious a surface as you can have, he said, but not every application is optimal. Concrete absorbs water, so applying concrete to surfaces that are too wet or too dry affects the outcome.

Concrete's ability to soak up water also makes it vulnerable to wet, freezing weather. Freezing water expands, and those ice crystals can break apart concrete. Salt exacerbates chipping and flaking because it can pull in even more water.

And Pendleton Public Works Director Bob Patterson advised fresh concrete is more susceptible to damage.

Several do-it-yourself websites for concrete care suggest the first line of defense is a snow blower or plastic snow shovel. Metal shovels can damage some types of concrete.

Fenton said aside from salt, other deicers should not react with concrete.

Various internet sources also warn salt can damage asphalt, so milder deicers are better. Avoid snow shovels and snow plows because they can damage the top layer of asphalt. And any cracks in asphalt need repairing with water resistant sealants.

For folks looking to stay away from chemical deicers of all sorts, sand, fine gravel and even cat litter over ice can provide some traction.

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