As the fall and winter seasons approach, the Homer Township Road District is preparing for major changes in our daily activities. The growing season has ended and we are no longer mowing the rights-of-way in the open areas. We completed our fall street sweeping of the curbed roads. We are still in the process of trimming trees that would prevent us from plowing the snow to the edge of the road. This year we are adding a new plow route and driver and to our system making us more efficient. We are also adding two new plow trucks. We should now have enough back-up equipment to substitute trucks that develop mechanical issues. This should eliminate the need to shut down routes to repair plow trucks during a winter event. We will start off the winter season with our anti-icing equipment before the initial winter event. We apply a coating of brine (saltwater) to the roads. When it dries a light coating of salt is left that alleviates the bonding of snow and ice to the asphalt. It is also applied periodically throughout the winter season as necessary. It will be used primarily on our arterial roads and bridges. Information on a few items that can help residents understand our procedures and policies that we employ at the Road District:

SNOW PLOWING
We are a Township Road District; we are not a Public Works Department. We have one crew of fifteen drivers to effectively address any winter weather event that should not work more than twelve consecutive hours plowing snow. Plowing snow is an extremely tedious task that tends to encourage fatigue. A fatigued driver is not a safe driver. We are constantly monitoring our crews during weather events to ensure the safety of our community and our staff. Most major snow events last 8 to 12 hours, some last longer. When you consider that it takes 3 to 4 hours to completely go through a plow route once the snow stops, you begin to see that most weather events require many man hours to address.

Today’s weather forecasting allows staff to meet hours prior to a winter event to determine an appropriate snow-plan. Things we consider when developing a snow-plan are:

- What time the event begins
- Duration
- Snowfall amounts
- Rush Hour Traffic
- School Bus Schedules
- Overnight Snow

We have a weather service that provides hourly forecasts of an event showing precipitation amounts, temperatures, wind speeds, road surface temperatures and recommended road treatment plans. Once the storm schedule is determined, we apply a working schedule for that storm that may include a full crew attack from beginning to end to an initial late evening skeleton crew, an overnight shut-down and a full crew at 4:00AM.
CAN WE IMPROVE DRIVING CONDITIONS?
There are times during blizzard snow conditions when the road is much the same 10 feet behind the plow truck as it is 10 feet in front of the plow truck. If we're unable to significantly improve the road conditions when plowing, we may choose to cease operation until weather conditions allow us to do so. Blowing and drifting snow can also create driving conditions that we are not able to adequately manage especially in open areas. It is important to remember that while our goal is to maintain road surfaces, driving conditions may always be hazardous during a winter weather event.

WINTER PARKING
The Village of Homer Glen is strictly enforcing the no-parking ordinance for two or more inches of snow. It is important to keep vehicles off the streets until they have been cleared of snow. Parked cars will be ticketed by the Will County Sheriff's Office.
We do not plow snow by "appointment". Therefore, if there is a vehicle in front of your house when we plow, we'll have to plow around it. Calling the road district when it is moved and expecting us to return to clear the snow is not practical.

PLOWING SNOW ONTO THE ROADWAY
It is now illegal to plow, snow-blow or shovel snow from your property onto the roadway. One of our goals when plowing snow is to make them safe to drive. Plowing, snow blowing or shoveling snow onto the roadway defeats that effort. Residents should be aware that if they plow, shovel or snow-blow snow onto the street, they may be held liable for any accident that it may cause.

MAILBOXES
We will not be responsible for those mailboxes that are either in a weak or distressed condition. It is the responsibility of the resident to maintain their mailboxes with enough integrity to sustain our normal snowplowing activity. As per the ordinance, we will either replace the mailbox with a standard wooden post and metal box or reimburse the resident with $125.00, which ever they chose. We cannot replace brick mailboxes other than as noted above. The Homer Township Road District cannot, in any way, participate in the construction of a brick structure along the edge of any roadway.

FAQ's
Q. Why does the Road District Keep Plowing Snow into My Driveway?
A. This is probably the most upsetting residential winter issue in every community where it snows (in the World!). And it’s the easiest to answer:

We cannot stop plowing because you plowed your driveway!

We must plow until the streets are cleared of snow. And if that happens late in the evening, we’ll have to return the next day to clear the streets of snow to the curb and/or shoulder for drainage when the snow melts.

Q. Why is my street the last to get plowed?
A. The community is broken down into 15 different plow routes and every route has a driver assigned to it. Each driver can determine the plow pattern for his/her route. An average winter will have 25 weather events and every event will average 4 trips down every road in a route to properly clear the snow. That’s an average of 100 trips down every road every winter season. Most drivers become very familiar with their routes and they will select a plow pattern that is most efficient for the route.