

EXTRA

The What-All

November 2015

Snow Brigade Report

by Bonnie Beckett

We begged for and got 2 snow blowers this year. Kristen Wheeler will again be co-brigade leader and house one of the machines. Only those who have met training and - - new this year - - county volunteer registration and background check requirements will be allowed to operate the machines. If interested, please do the following three things in sequence ASAP. They must be completed before the training on November 7th.

1. Let me know of your interest so I can add your name to the list of prospective volunteers. I need your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address.

2. Follow the link below to the Arlington County volunteer website. Look on the lower left side for the blue Register to Volunteer link. This link leads you to the background check required by state law of those volunteering. The information is very basic (nothing financial). You can skip all the questions about where, when, and how often you want to volunteer as all are irrelevant. Just take 5 minutes to fill it out and send it in. While this may seem unnecessary, it means that you will be covered by the county insurance in case of an accident. You can register online here:

<http://parks.arlingtonva.us/come-volunteer-us/>

Once your volunteer registration is processed, Fernando Buenaventura, Trades Manager, will be notified that you've been cleared to volunteer. Please just send me an e-mail to let me know that you've completed this step.

3. Finally, take the mandatory training, which is only offered once. Training Date and Hours: 7:30 am thru 2:30 p.m., Saturday November 7, 2015. Location: Arlington County, DPR, Trades Center, 2700 So. Taylor St. Arlington VA 22206 (Equipment shop). This is in Shirlington near the county animal shelter. The training is a drop-in process with about 5 minutes to complete some paperwork and about 10 minutes to be shown how to operate the snow blower and give it a whirl. You can show up at any time during the above hours. Again, please let me know when you complete this step.

Again, only those who complete all 3 steps will be allowed to use the county snow blowers.

Thanks in advance for helping to keep our community safe for walkers. We also welcome help from those with their own shovels and/or snow blowers, as well as donations of ice melt (pet friendly preferred for park).

Bonnie Beckett (14th St.)

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Snow Assistance Available

If we have sufficient volunteers trained to use the county-provided snow blowers, we will again be able to assist neighbors who are physically unable to clear their own sidewalks. If you will need assistance, or if you know of a neighbor who will need assistance but may not receive the What-All, please contact Bonnie Beckett so she can put the neighbor on the list of those who will need assistance. Please provide the name, street address, and phone number for those needing assistance.

The Snow Removal Ordinance

The County's snow removal ordinance requires all Arlington property owners to clear snow and ice from public sidewalks adjacent to their property within a designated time period. The ordinance also prohibits transferring or depositing snow and ice from private property onto public property. Individual homeowners who are physically incapable of complying with the Ordinance are exempt (read about exemptions, below).

Focus on Safety, Accessibility

Providing clear, safe roadways and pedestrian routes ensures access to jobs, schools and services in our walkable community. The snow removal ordinance helps ensure safe access for pedestrians and to make all transportation modes available as soon as possible after a snow storm.

Ordinance Specifics for Residents and Business Owners

Snow and ice removal - All property owners are required to remove snow and ice from public sidewalks adjacent to their property:

- Must be removed from the entire width of the sidewalk up to 3 feet wide (to accommodate wheelchairs, strollers, and adults with children in hand).
- Must be removed within 24 hours after the snow stops falling when accumulations are less than 6 inches, and within 36 hours when 6 or more inches of snow accumulate (as measured at National Airport, per National Weather Service). If another snow event occurs, the clock will reset to the end of the most recent snowfall. We will post the official snow ending time on the webpage (<http://emergency.arlingtonva.us/weather/snow-ice/snow-removal-ordinance/>).
- Noncompliance could result in a civil penalty of \$50 for sidewalks less than 200 linear feet in length, or \$100 for sidewalks longer than 200 feet.
- The County may remove the snow or ice on sidewalks around private property when the owner fails to comply within the designated time period, and charge the cost to the owner.

Depositing snow and ice on streets or sidewalks: Private owners may not deposit snow or ice from private property onto public property, including streets & sidewalks. Such action may result in a class 4 (criminal) misdemeanor and fine of \$250.

The County is responsible for clearing sidewalks bordering County government-owned property. Read about the County's snowfighting efforts.

Exemptions

Even though some individuals are exempt from the Ordinance, it is our hope that everyone will do the best they can to clear sidewalks, keeping our community safe and walkable.

- Homeowners who may need extra help can contact their civic association; the County is working with them to support neighborhood volunteer clearing efforts.

Commercial property owners are expected to comply with the Ordinance.

- Snow clearing should be part of basic business operating plans.

Individual homeowners who are physically incapable of complying with the ordinance are exempt.

- The County will not be pre-qualifying or maintaining lists of exempt individuals.
- Prior to issuing citations, County staff will make every effort to contact owners to determine if they are exempt.
- In the unlikely event that you receive a citation (and you are exempt), merely provide information about your exemption.

If snow/ice is redeposited on your cleared sidewalk as a result of government action (e.g., snowplowing), you will be exempt from the ordinance.

However, it's our hope that everyone will do what they can to re-clear sidewalks to ensure our community is safe and walkable.