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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, November 07, 2011

### **NAVAJO COUNTY IS GEARED UP FOR WINTER SNOW REMOVAL**

**HOLBROOK, AZ** – Cooler weather is here and snow season is on the way. Navajo County has already had some snow activity in some areas and more is expected in the near future. The Navajo County Public Works team has made all appropriate preparations, and is now ready for the snow season when it begins in earnest. Trucks have been equipped with snow blades and cinder spreaders, and cinder material has been stockpiled throughout the county.

“We try to be as proactive as we can with our snow removal efforts,” commented Assistant County Manager Dusty Parsons. “We know that our emergency responders, schools, businesses, tourists and residents need the freedom to get from A to B without a significant disturbance due to the weather, and we try to accommodate those needs as best we can.”

Here are some facts to remember:

Navajo County Department of Public Works is responsible for snow removal and cindering roads during winter storms on County maintained roads. ADOT and the various municipalities within Navajo County also have similar responsibilities for the roads under their jurisdiction.

The Navajo County Snow Removal Policy provides a general guideline for snow removal. In general, snow removal operations are to start at 4” of snow accumulation. The policy also provides a priority that determines which roads get snow removal services first.

- The first priorities are the bus routes and arterial roads. These classifications are considered the main transportation corridors in the county and every effort is made to keep these roads safe for traffic during the entire snow event.
- The next priority is the minor and residential roads. The snow removal for these roads is undertaken as resources of the Public Works Department are made available in light of the first priorities.

It is not uncommon for all the members of the Navajo County road crews to be engaged in the snow removal effort when there is a significant winter event. If there is a significant and extensive snow event Navajo County crew members will work in 12 hour shifts to maintain snow removal around-the-clock.

During a snow event, the purpose of the initial pass is to open roadways so as to permit responsible traffic flow. A natural consequence of these initial passes is the creation of windrows (snow berms), which may often affect driveway entrances. When the storm is over and roads are cleared, Navajo County road crews will begin the process of clearing out the windrows on driveways that have been left behind during the snow removal operation. Navajo County does not have the equipment or manpower to address these windrows in the initial phases of snow removal, but the removal of the windrows will be addressed, on County maintained roads, during the clean-up phase of the operation. Generally, residents can expect windrows to be removed within 24 to 48 hours after the storm has passed.

Navajo County road crews do not have the responsibility to remove snow from driveways and other private property. Road crews cannot work on private property, and therefore driveway snow removal, and snow removal from other private areas is the responsibility of each individual resident. It is strongly recommended that each resident make arrangements for snow removal on their private property prior to the arrival of winter storms.

As always, if you have an emergency call 911 and the Sheriff's office will contact appropriate personnel to facilitate snow removal as quickly as possible.

#### Frequently Asked Questions

***Question - Do you use salt or de-icers to remove snow and ice?***

Answer- No, we do not use salt or de-icers. We have found that cinders work well and are environmentally a safe solution.

***Question - What happens when you have a significantly large snowfall? Do you have other resources that you can call? Are there things that local citizens can do to help?***

Answer-If it is a true snow emergency, and the State of Arizona declares it as such, Navajo County would use the State to procure additional help, which could include local contractors. However, without a declaration by the State, Navajo County will maximize the resources and personnel available to be as productive as possible. The county will work around the clock to clear roads, but be aware that the night shift is the most productive as there is less traffic on the roads. Finally, if there is significant snowfall, we advise that citizens to stay home and keep the roads clear of traffic.

***Question - In the course of snow removal if a mailbox is damaged does Navajo County fix or replace it?***

Answer-Navajo County will fix it if the mailbox was in good condition before the snow event and if it was located outside of the roadway.

***Question - What is the biggest obstacle for snow removal?***

Answer- The biggest problem is vehicles parked in the roadway. When vehicles are parked on the roadway, it forces crews to go around cars which can potentially leave some vehicles snowed in and the road partially cleared. In some cases crews cannot clear the road at all.

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