

Greg Kuczewski checks out the hydraulic salt spreader at the City of Farmington DPW yard in preparation for snow-covered roads throughout the winter. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## DPW road crews ready for snow emergencies

Let the snow fall. The Farmington and Farmington Hills Department of Public Works (DPW) crews are ready to plow out from even the most brutal of winter blizzards.

"We're in good shape with substantial inventories of salt and sand," said Hills DPW Director Bob Shaw. "Two new trucks are on order and are expected to arrive in early January."

The city is divided into north and south sections snow removal procedures. The north section, from 11 Mile Road to 14 Mile Road, is administered by one foreman and his crew. The south portion of the city, from 8 Mile Road to 11 Mile is handled by another foreman and crew.

The fleet of equipment includes two road graders, one is used in each section, five five-yard dump trucks, three 18-yard dump trucks and two four-wheel drive vehicles. The dump trucks are equipped with front plows, scrapers for lighter snow removal, and salt spreaders.

"Last year we maintained 240 miles of road with 2,300 tons of salt and 800 tons of sand chloride," Shaw said.

This year's supply will come from the Borden Salt Co. (\$12.85 a ton) and

sand from the Levy Co. (\$6.15 a ton). Salt is used on paved roads, with sand the priority for gravel roads.

Besides the two foremen, Shaw's crew includes 14 drivers and four mechanics.

"OUR FIRST PRIORITY is fire routes, then school bus routes, then the intersections of major roads and hilly subdivisions," Shaw said.

The streets that get salted first are 9 Mile, 11 Mile, 13 Mile, 14 Mile, Gill, Drake, Halstead, Freedom, Folsom and Grand River between Halstead and Haggerty. Not all side streets get salted or plowed.

"The foreman uses his judgement on secondary roads. Major salt and sand routes are plotted on a map," the DPW director said.

Last winter, the plows went out 29 times. A half dozen of those trips were for snowfall more than eight inches accumulation.

"We had crews working for 30 hours straight to get all the roads cleared last winter. Ninety miles of gravel roads were maintained with sand. We can't use sand on paved roads because it plugs the sewers."

EARL BILLING is the new DPW director in Farmington this winter.

The former school district employee said he is ready to tackle the new job.

"Our crew is ready to be called for a blizzard or other snow emergency," he said.

Equipment includes one road grader and three plow and salt spreader trucks. Eight drivers and two mechanics man the fleet.

"We have 400 tons of salt on hand. We don't use sand unless we run out of salt," he said.

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## Recreation liaison named

The Farmington Board of Education has appointed district athletic director Jack Cotton to act as liaison with the Farmington Recreation Department.

Cotton, 48, has been director of physical education and athletics in the school district for 23 years. As liaison, he will assist with program coordination and policy implementation between the schools and the recreation department.

"THIS SHOULD OPEN tremendous communication lines between two public autonomous governments, the schools and the city, who have the same goal: to serve the people of this community," said Douglas Gaynor, director of parks and recreation.

"We will be dealing with Mr. Cotton in areas concerning policy, procedures and future development in recreation programs," he continued.

Many Farmington Hills recreation programs require the use of school facilities.

"WE ALREADY HAVE established excellent cooperation with the recreation department," Cotton said. "We are both serving the same constituents."

"We coordinate, but we don't overlap. They serve an entirely different clientele. They handle leisure pursuits for people of all ages. My only concern is school age youngsters and inter-scholastic sports."

Robert Pugh, Jr., a local attorney and chairman of the newly formed Farmington Hills Recreation Commission, approached the school board with the request last month for a formal liaison between the city and schools.

"THIS IS IMPORTANT because it is difficult to work with two separate governments," he explained.

"Mr. Cotton was selected because he had a good rapport with Mr. Gaynor."

The two have established an informal working relationship," Pugh said.

He said the purpose of the nine member advisory commission is to "make recreational pursuits more responsive to the needs of our community, to keep up with the times."

Cotton was recommended as liaison by School Supt. Lewis Schulman and approved by the board last month. He will handle requests from other school personnel on recreation matters and have direct access to the recreation office.

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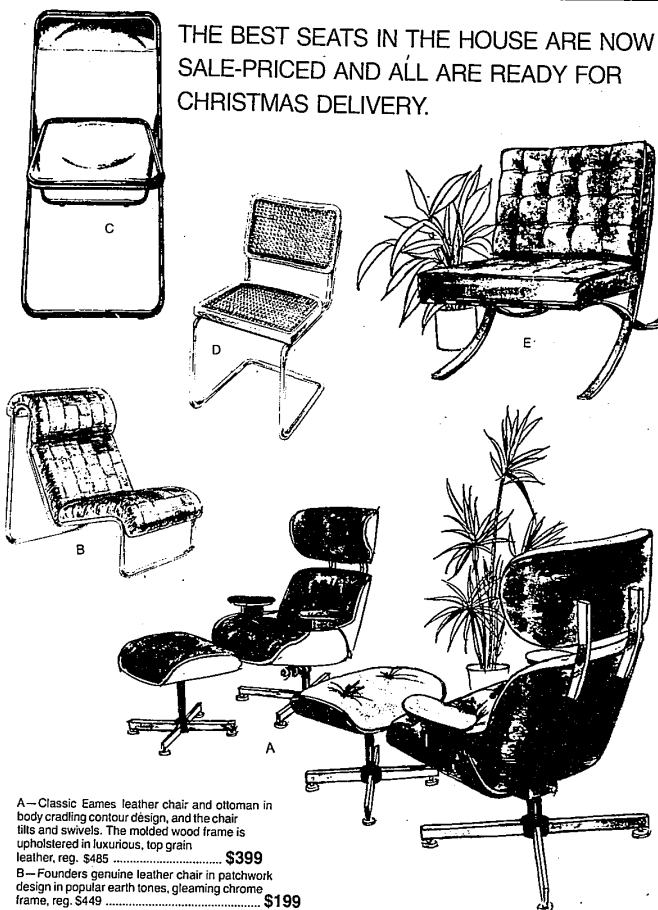
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