

County road crews ready for wintertime snow jobs

BY RALPH R. ECHEINAW
STAFF WRITER

The trucks are tuned up, the salt domes are full, the contracts are signed and the Road Commission for Oakland County is once again ready to go to the mat with Old Man Winter.

The road crews had their initial test Monday morning when the first significant snow fall of the season arrived. The first trucks hit the road at 3 a.m., beginning a long job of clearing 2,500 miles of roadway the county is responsible for and 300 miles that it does under contract for the state.

Road Commission spokesman John Joy said 30,000 tons of salt has been stockpiled for winter and more than 200 trucks are standing by to clear the roads.

However, half of those trucks are old and the Road Commission will only use them if absolutely necessary. "We have over 200 trucks that we might be able to use if we got into a really serious snowstorm," Joy said.

The Road Commission can work drivers for no more than 16 hours, and then must give them at least six hours off, Joy said. In a big storm additional drivers would be culled from the ranks of construction inspectors, traffic safety people and others. "We plan to have more drivers than trucks," Joy said.

But the Road Commission isn't responsible for clearing every road in Oakland County. City governments are responsible for maintenance on all but their main roads,

which are the county's responsibility. Some cities, like Troy, plow and salt the main roads, too, under contract to the county. In townships the county is responsible for all roads.

Joy said that some of the county snowplow drivers have received defensive driving training over the summer to better deal with traffic.

Some people get impatient with the trucks and perhaps don't realize that they weigh 36,000 pounds.

"We need drivers to understand that the circumstances they're driving in are the same circumstances the truck drivers are driving in," Joy said. "We'd like them to remember that and be understanding about it."

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CLARIFICATION

A column that appeared in the Thursday, Nov. 25, *Eccentric* incorrectly stated that the Plymouth-Canton school district did not participate in Gov. John Engler's first report card on schools. The district did comply.



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