

Did you know? Plowing, blowing snow into street or road is illegal

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Safety on the Roads, by Dave Werner

ALBANY, NY - At the Nov. 28th County Traffic Safety Board meeting, it was brought to the Board's attention that numerous residents or private snowplow operators in the act of plowing driveways are illegally plowing snow into streets and roads.

Not only does this practice cause our state, county, town and village snowplows to unnecessarily re-plow the roads, but it is in violation of Vehicle and Traffic Law section 1219 (a) which prohibits any person from plowing, shoveling, or blowing snow into any street, road or highway.

Section 1219 (b) stipulates that anyone that places or permits to be placed upon any highway any material which interferes with the safe use of the highway, including snow, shall immediately remove the same or cause it to be removed. This means that, if you are a homeowner that hires someone to plow your driveway, if you permit him/her to plow the snow into the road, or are aware that he/she is doing so, you could also be cited under this law.

Fines for a first offense or either of the above violations include up to a \$150 fine and/or 15 days in jail, plus applicable surcharges.

Representation at this recent Traffic Safety Board meeting included enforcement officers from the NY State Police and other agencies. They listened to the complaint from the highway superintendent describing the numerous violations. This practice can be dangerous to other drivers - that's why it is prohibited. Unfortunately, sometimes it takes tickets and fines to achieve compliance.

Another area of concern is plowing snow from driveways and parking lots onto sidewalks. All of our county villages have laws or codes that require sidewalks to be cleared of snow. These laws are rarely enforced, but the practice of putting even more snow from driveways and parking lots onto adjacent sidewalks should not be permitted.