

# Cavan County Council

## Winter Service Plan



**Comhairle Contae  
an Chabháin**  
Cavan  
County Council

## ***Purpose and Scope***

Local Authorities are required to carry out a review of their winter service operations annually to produce a plan outlining their proposed response to adverse winter conditions. The purpose of this document is to identify the processes, procedures and key personnel employed by Cavan County Council in the delivery of their winter service plan.

## ***Policy***

### **Policy Statement**

“Cavan County Council will endeavour to carry out winter service operations to the best of its ability, within resources available, to alleviate problems caused by adverse weather conditions that affect the people of the County.”

### **Introduction**

Cavan County Council is responsible for the maintenance of over 3000km of National, Regional and Local Roads throughout the County. The operation of a winter service is undertaken by the council to minimise the impact of frost, ice or snow on the travelling public both in terms of safety and economical terms. The primary responsibility for road safety always remains with road users who must exercise sufficient caution to take account of prevailing weather conditions.

Cavan County Council does not have the operational or financial resources to carry out salting of its entire road network. The authority has identified a schedule of priority routes which are gritted with salt, each time it is deemed necessary to do so. Other routes are gritted from time to time as the need arises and within the budgets and resources available.

The council endeavours to maintain the clearly defined network of priority routes in a passable condition in the interest of road safety. However, weather scenarios may arise when it is not possible to keep all priority roads ice free. When and if this occurs, priority 1 routes will be treated and retreated ahead of all other routes. The current designated priority routes for the winter service response are listed in Table 1 below.

**Designated Priority Routes**

Route Designation	Description	Level of Service
Priority 1	National Roads: N3, N54, N55, N87, N16 (Salted by Leitrim Co Co) R198 to Hospital, R935 Salt Depot.	To be treated during all weather events
Priority 2	R188, R198, R154, R199, R203, R194, R191, R178, R935, R188, R192, R162, R190, R202, R205, R165, R164, R200, R207, R206, R212, L1045, LP1532, L3020, L3021, L3026, L3029, L2500, L2502.	To be treated as part of the normal winter service but may have interruptions to treatment in certain severe weather events
Priority 3	Local recognised hazard locations as directed by Municipal District Engineers.	Not treated as part of the normal winter service but may receive intermittent treatment during certain severe weather events

Table 1 – Designated Priority Routes

Priority 1 – National Primary and Secondary Roads

Priority 2 – Most of the Regional Roads and some key Local Primary Roads

Priority 3 – All other roads

Priority 1 and 2 routes form part of the normal winter maintenance service and will be treated when it is deemed necessary to do so. Priority 3 routes are not treated as part of the normal winter maintenance service but may receive intermittent treatment during certain severe weather events as directed by the Municipal District Engineer. During certain severe weather events where resources become limited, Priority 1 routes will be treated to the exclusion of all others.

The Municipal Districts may carry out additional localised winter maintenance service subject to resource availability and prevailing weather conditions. The nature and extent of this service is at the discretion of the Municipal Engineers, who are best placed to judge priority and availability of resources on each situation as they arise.

In view of the operational and financial demands in terms of winter service, Cavan County Council may no longer be able to assist local problem areas such as Farms, Schools, Churches as it did in

the past. In the absence of Council assistance, effected parties should make alternative appropriate arrangements to prepare themselves for the winter period.

### ***Overall Map of the Service Plan Area***

A map of the designated priority salting routes is included in Appendix 1 of this document and is also available for viewing on the Cavan County Council Website at:

<https://www.cavancoco.ie/services/roads-transportation/severe-weather/current-salting-routes/current-salting-routes.html>

### ***Decision Making***

#### **Duty Engineers**

The Council has a roster of Duty Engineers whose role is to monitor weather forecasts, utilise Met Eireann Consultancy service, monitor road conditions via the Vaisala Manager system, and then manage (in conjunction with the Machinery Yard), the deployment of Salt Spreaders and the treatment of roads. All decisions regarding the winter maintenance Priority 1 and 2 callouts are made by the Duty Engineers.

#### **Forecasting System**

Winter gritting is undertaken to increase road safety. The objective is to reduce the negative impact of frost or snow on the road surface and to treat the road prior to, or soon after, the occurrence of frost or snow. In order to plan for winter gritting operations, it is necessary to have a forecasting system in place.

The winter maintenance forecasting system involves the collation and interpretation of data from:

- Road weather information stations from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII previously the National Roads Authority)
- Road Weather Information System called Vaisala Manager
- Weather forecasts by Met Eireann.

The weather stations provide road weather data on road surface temperatures, dew temperatures, road wetness, wind conditions, and salt concentrations that exist on the road surface. This information is fed electronically into the Vaisala Manager which gives real time weather data and road weather predictions for the area. This software also provides text alerts when predetermined limits are reached for "Road Surface Temperature, Precipitation, and Road Surface State".

In County Cavan, the Vaisala Manager Software provides recording and observation of data from two Weather/Ice Monitoring Stations on the N3 at Virginia and Butlersbridge. The information it provides together with Met Eireann forecasts, assist the Duty Engineer in finalising the decision on whether to salt on any night. The forecasting system is accurate to about 85% at best. This can mean that there

are a few days in the winter when frost is not forecast but may occur. There are also significant local weather variations that are difficult to forecast. Good judgment based on data available and experience is critical.

## **Resources**

### **Winter Gritting Staff and Equipment**

<b>Machinery Yard</b>	
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Plant and Equipment</b>
Normal Staffing – 3	10 Trucks
On Call – 8, Managed centrally normally assigned to roads areas	Demountable Stainless Steel Salt Spreaders
	3 No. 9m <sup>3</sup> – Pre-wet
	1 No. 6m <sup>3</sup> – Pre-wet
	5 No. 5m <sup>3</sup>
	10 Snow Ploughs
	1 Loading Shovel
	1 Brine Saturation Station at Moynehall

<b>Cavan-Belturbet Municipal District</b>	<b>Office No: 049-9526121</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Plant and Equipment</b>
Normal Staff - 23 Outdoor Road Staff;	5 crew cabs
3 G.S.S.; 3 Engineers,	5 JCB's
On Call-10 men, 3 G.S.S.	3 mini salters on crew cabs
	Tractor/Plough West Cavan
	Tractor Spreader West Cavan
	Tractor Spreader Cavan Town

<b>Ballyjamesduff Municipal District</b>	<b>Office No: 049 8547013</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Plant and Equipment</b>
Normal Staff -20 Outdoor Road Staff; 2	5 crew cabs
G.S.S., 3 Engineers,	3 JCB's
On Call-10 men, 2 G.S.S.	2 mini spreaders for crew cabs

<b>Bailieborough-Cootehill Municipal District</b>	<b>Office No: 049-4378477</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Plant and Equipment</b>
Normal staffing 24 Outdoor Road Staff; 2	2 mini salters for crew cabs,
G.S.S; 3 Engineers	1 buggy spreader
On Call- 10 men, 2 G.S.S.'s	1 tractor spreader
	4 crew cabs
	4 JCB's

**OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY NUMBER: 087 6118116**

**Salt Storage**

Cavan County Council endeavours to keep its salt stocks at as high a level as possible during the winter season. Currently, Cavan County Council has the capacity to store approximately 2,750 tonnes of salt (enough to do circa 30 pre-salting runs for the County for standard frost conditions). During severe snowfalls and, where resources permit, a contingency plan may be put in place to provide grit at strategic locations in each Municipal District.

***Historical Gritting Events***

The frequency at which the winter gritting crews are called out to salt Scheduled Routes depends on the severity of the weather during the season. The numbers of call-outs in previous seasons were:

Season	Callouts
2007/08	37
2008/09	66
2009/10	77
2011/12	52
2012/13	85
2013/14	77
2014/15	72
2015/16	58
2016/17	55
2017/18	100
2018/19	42
2019/20	61

***Purchase a Salt Bin Scheme***

**Salt Bins**

The winter weather of 2009 and 2010 highlighted the need of local communities in having an organised response to severely cold prolonged weather events. To aid community participation in keeping local roads and footpaths open during such events, Cavan County Council introduced the “purchase a salt bin scheme”. The scheme allows local community groups, businesses, schools and churches to prepare themselves for the winter period at a reasonable cost as follows.

**Purchase Options**

Option A: 1 Bin – Delivery plus one fill of salt	<b>Fee € 170.00</b>
Option B: 1 Bin – Delivery only	<b>Fee € 120.00</b>

The proposed charge is €170 per bin including delivery and initial fill of the bin. During prolonged severe weather conditions, the Council may refill the bins at cost depending on resources. It is however, recommended that the community groups find their own suppliers where possible, as other duties may hamper this service.

Interested parties should apply for bins from their local Municipal District office or on line at;  
<https://www.cavancoco.ie/services/roads-transportation/severe-weather/>

**Public Information**

Winter weather precautions and general advice is posted and advertised on the Cavan County Council website, the Department of Transport, the TII, and the AA's website.

The Communications Officer, Corporate Services deals with public announcements when required. Announcements are coordinated between the Duty Engineers and Corporate Services.

## **Appendix 1 - Map of Salting routes in County Cavan**



