



**Snow Summit
March 16**

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Provide Your Ideas and Stories for Future Storms and Emergencies



Snow Summit Feedback

- E-mail
- Ideas/Social Voting
- Phone



E-mail Feedback

The Office of Public Affairs received the following 111 E-mails from March 3-15.

While venturing out in the snow on Sunday, February 7th I noticed that only the left hand shoulder of Rt. 28 was plowed. While it was fine driving over in the plowed shoulder, getting on and off the highway was rather difficult because you had to drive through 2 or 3 lanes which had not been plowed.

I think next time plowing the right hand lane would make more sense.

Thank you! Kelly Spann

When the snow was finally removed in my neighborhood (almost 2 full weeks after it fell) it was done on three weekday nights in the middle of the night. First night from 1am-4am, two nights later starting at 11:30pm, and then the third "night" from 4am on. The removal was completely disruptive to sleeping families all week long. It's mind-boggling as to why it took 3 different attempts and why over-night when we live in such a quiet community where there is little to no traffic during the school day (Pimmit Hills).

My husband is a first responder at a government site, so he had to work through both snowstorms, so I did the shoveling. I shoveled constantly so that he could get home, and some neighbors and I shoveled part of our personal street. I shoveled out my car on the street, the fire hydrant and part of the space in front of my car....and my neighbor's car. Our homeowner's association sent the plows around our street a few days after the first storm and second one. The problem was our county streets, Paddington and Gothwaite in the Londontowne part of Centreville. Driving down those streets damaged our cars, and my husband has an SUV! It was literally like driving down a moguls course at the Olympics! My car actually hit high center every time I left the neighborhood! This went on for several weeks after the second storm! This, in combination with people walking down what usually is a main road made for very hazardous driving conditions. People in our neighborhood were starting to take it personally, since we are not the most elite community in Fairfax County. But we pulled together as a community and made it work....one thing we do have is hard workers who are good neighbors. I had a lot of fun shoveling with my neighbors. Maybe next time the plow could come through a few times before there are melt through conditions that form huge holes in the ice! Thanks! Jerri A. Harrington

While primary focus during the storm is on the main roads, the inside roads always take the back seat. Logically it makes sense to get the main roads cleaned. My main concern is not what happens during the storm as to what happens afterward.

I am looking at the roads in my neighborhood that have pot holes and they are broken all over the place. Its been weeks since the blizzard but not sure if anyone will look at it anytime soon. Some of these smaller streets connect our schools and hospitals. For example the side streets next to London Towne Elementary school in Centreville are horribly damaged due to the blizzard. It's the only way parents can come and drop their kids and with each day, and due to heavy traffic in the mornings and afternoons the street condition is deteriorating. There are many streets like that all over Fairfax County that we need to take care of before accidents occur.

I live in Forest Edge cluster in Reston. Our subdivision never gets plowed, and I didn't realize that VDOT is responsible for determining who gets priority for plowing. We have an elementary school and a church on the street to get out of the subdivision. We rely on heavy vehicles (vans, trucks) to create ruts for cars to get out. With the amount of snow, the ice buildup on the streets was several inches thick. Buses couldn't navigate at all. We have 2 way traffic and parking on both sides of the street which take away from the amount of room for navigation. My apartment complex clears our parking lot and the street that connects the 2 sides of the complex. The scariest part of my commute is the ride down Becontree Lane to North Shore Drive because the roads are never treated. Two emergency vehicles had to go to Cedar Ridge Apartments. This effectively blocked any access from Colvin Woods Apartments since we had to move our cars and wait for the fire truck to come down into our apartment complex to turn around and get out of the area.

I think that when snow is forecast that one side of the street should be designated as a snow emergency route and parking not be allowed to give a wider passage for vehicles. We get commercial vehicles parking on the street which further impedes the flow of traffic.

I live on a private road (Wolf Run Shoals Road) off a state road (Lakewood Lane). With trees down on the state road, VDOT could not get through, so of course, our private service didn't get close (the private services tried to send us a bill anyway, but that's another story.).

On the 8th day, we (the neighbors) cut up the trees and dug ourselves out 1-1/2 miles to Wolf Run Shoals Road. VDOT eventually got in to grind up the trees, but never put a plow down.

The big problem was communication. We had no way of knowing what others knew or were doing. Our Delegate expressed concern and sympathy, but that's it.

VDOT and the citizens would benefit from a clearing house (electronic, web, telephone) to enable citizens to get information about where the resources are going and what the schedule is going to be. The updates on TV are nice, generally, but not helpful, specifically.

Frank Blechman

I live on Cindy Lane in Annandale. The street was not completely cleared until a decision was made to open schools. Cindy Lane is the primary route to Poe Middle School. A front end loader was cleaning the street late into the night the night before schools opened. A one time pass of a snow plow did occur a day or two before the front end loader.

Another problem is people shoveling or blowing snow back into the street. Overall I think the snow was removed in an expeditiously way. There was just too much snow it get all roads open in a timely manner
GREAT JOB SNOW REMOVAL CREWS

Johnny Honaker, Annandale VA

It wasn't fun after a while, and my street wasn't plowed for four days, and a full week to be plowed properly... but coming from New England I recognize that this was an extraordinary snow event and I would like to thank all the people who worked so hard to clear the streets and ensure our safety (including fire, police, power, water, and other county employees). I know it must have been an exhausting time for many, and want you to know your work and dedication was appreciated!

Good snow removal technique observed! A few days after the major snowfall, I watched two front-end loaders working very late at night, clearing Orange Hunt Drive (and more of the Red Fox Forest neighborhood in the Braddock District). They cleared the street without putting any snow at the base of the many driveways that had been cleared already. They pushed much of the snow when working between the driveways, but when they got to the driveways, they lifted it up and deposited it further down the street, usually ending up on top of a sidewalk that had been shoveled; but better a sidewalk than a huge mound blocking a driveway; hence, everyone could get out the next morning.

When the snow plows came down Thunderchase Drive, the main road through our community in Reston, they completely plowed in the side streets with a wall of snow over three to four feet high. As a result, I could not get my four wheel drive truck out of our street. I had called the local hospital and volunteered my vehicle to bring in hospital personnel. But with a wall of snow and ice blocking our street, I could not get out and had to call the hospital back and tell them I could not help.

In future snowfalls, the plows should be instructed NOT to plow in the side streets, or once the main street has been plowed on each side, they should be instructed to go back and plow out the entrances to the side streets that were plowed deep in snow and ice.

My wife and I took a snow walk to see how things looked outside of our street and found that some of our side streets were plowed to the asphalt while others were not plowed at all, in fact, as stated above, our street was plowed CLOSED to incoming and outgoing traffic. It took everyone on our street calling VDOT's snow phone line to get them to come back and open up our street and plow one lane open. I few of us who

own large snow blowers when out into the street to open the lane so that cars could pass each other, The way VDOT left our street only one car could travel. As a result we had many stuck cars as they met other cars on their way in and out. As a result some one had to stop and try backing up. Something that often resulted in one of the cars getting stuck.

On braddock (where it changes to pickwick road) they plowed a single lane at the curve and left that for the first couple of days -- there were a few close calls as a result, but generally people were cautious driving and avoided any collisions (to my knowledge, at least) if they were going to only clear one lane, that was really the worst place to do it along that stretch of road.

Also at the braddock/29 interchange, there is a new walgreens and BofA commercial area with a parking lot - it seemed that they were clearing their lot directly into the road on more than one occasion -- this was dangerous and caused issues for those of us travelling on braddock to avoid or drive over the newly added snow. Generally speaking, I think the crews did a good job and my stretch of braddock road was fully taken care of in time. Appreciate all the overtime those guys put in to make it happen!!

I am a life-long resident of this area. Since we have never had this much snow, I appreciated all the efforts to clear the roads. I live on a primary road and there were many trips by the snowplows up and down the road. Sometimes they came two at a time. I think if the plows would have at least plowed once on the side streets it would have been better for those people. Hopefully we will not have such a fierce snowfall any time in the near future. I am a 71-yr old widow and was not able to shovel the snow as I usually do. There was no way I could have gotten the trail shoveled that is in front of my house.

I live in the Cherry Run neighborhood in Burke. Our neighborhood wasn't plowed until Thursday by a front loader despite having a school in the neighborhood. The front loader operator did a tremendous job as he cleared curb to curb in a very careful, but slow manner. It took him two full days to clear Koziara Dr and the connecting cul de sacs. Overall, I think the neighborhood would've been much better served if a couple lanes would've been cleared quickly, followed by the curb to curb cleaning. Also, the operator started in the middle of the neighborhood and worked towards the main street. So even though some cars could get out of their driveways, they still couldn't make it to the main roads until the operator finally made it to Old Keene Mill Rd on Friday night.

I'd also like to note that many people in the neighborhood were responding to the county's request to shovel sidewalks, only to have the front loader put massive piles of snow on the sidewalks. Considering the fact that snow shoveling can be quite strenuous, to the point of bringing on heart attacks, the county should really think twice about putting people through the trouble of shoveling out those areas if their efforts are going to be undone by the road crews.

Finally, I'd like to comment on how disappointed I was, that on the Monday after the first storm, I saw 3 big plows on Burke Centre Pwy basically doing nothing. They had their plows down on road that was already

down to the concrete. At that point, they were plowing a few patches of snow/slush off the roads that provided no benefit to anyone. Burke Centre Pwy needed widening as snow still covered part of the lane. Those big trucks made no effort to widen the road and provided no extra benefit to the local main roads. If those trucks couldn't handle the remaining work on the main road, which I doubt they could, they should've turned their efforts to the neighborhoods as that would've provided the most benefit to the community.

Overall, I think the county and state did a tremendous job. I have only one comment/suggestion. The entrance, driveway/street, and parking lot at Twin Lakes Golf Course was cleared very early in the process (maybe even one day after the storm). On the other hand, our local elementary school wasn't even touched for days after the storms perhaps as much as a week later. I completely understand that the Park Authority and the school system are separate entities, but in this case shouldn't the school system be a higher priority than the parks? (Who's golfing in February anyway?) There needs to be a way for Park Authority resources to be reallocated to the public schools in cases like our huge snow storm.

Our neighborhood was inundated by the heavy snow falls in Dec 09 and Feb 10. We heard that County services were being cut back, due to budget shortfalls, but had no idea this would include clearing public street of heavy snow. From the February snow fall it took more than 10 days to see a County truck or Contractor to attempt to remove or move the snow on the streets. Residents like myself had to use picks and shovels to clear our sidewalks, driveways and even the public street of snow and ice. The County get an "F" for snow removal in Feb 2010.

Recommendation: Put radio transmitters on the County's trucks link to a map on the County or VDOT website. Then give us a computer link so we can see if they are near our neighborhood or likely to come thru in the near future. Looking out the window for the cleanup trucks to come just led to high anxiety.

Mr. Winston Coley, Falls Church

The most frustrating thing about snow in this area is the reaction of the schools, and the way that affects many people's lives. It is hard to predict whether schools will close or, for big storms, how long they will remain closed. And it seems like they don't make an all-out effort to reopen as soon as possible. Choosing to close on Monday, Feb. 15, after no snow had fallen since the previous Wednesday, was ridiculous and disruptive to previous plans. If they were worried about sidewalks not being cleared, then they should have planned better so they would be cleared! Hire more temporary workers, or raise the call for volunteers sooner, or something. This year's plan failed.

In general, the County and the School system should jointly commit to re-opening as soon as possible, and should work together toward that goal. Don't take it day-by-day; when the snow stops, announce a re-opening date, and then make it happen.

I live in a neighborhood of approximately 200 or so homes in the Falls Church area of Fairfax County, 1 mile from Fairfax INOVA hospital. Not a single VDOT truck came to our neighborhood until February 20, 2010 at 2:00 a.m. which, upon, daylight, most of us were in shock to see new 10 feet walls of snow bulldozed over the curbs into our yards, breaking off perfectly healthy plants and trees. If you recall, the first snow fell on February 5 -- what judgment was made to send plows after this long a period when, most of us had already devised our own clean-up methods? So, not only was our neighborhood ignored during the worst of the snow, VDOT made things far worse by re-locating snow with bulldozers to our front yards. I have pictures to demonstrate the effect of this lack of common sense. I believe anyone with the gift of sight should have been able to see how inappropriate it was to relocate snow that was already out of the street to create these huge walls of snow in front of everyone's yard. In my own case, I was scheduled for hip surgery on 2/22 and on 2/21 was out shoveling the newly VDOT-created snow wall from my front yard plants. Should anyone care to see my pictures, I have taken a few to show the results of this assault. But back to February 5 - 9 when our neighborhood realized we were being ignored by VDOT. Most of us, including myself, had to get to work so we took our own clean-up measures. I personally paid a private plow company to plow our street -- not driveway. Other nearby streets chipped in and bought snow-blowers to clear streets, not driveways. Others organized shoveling groups to clear streets, not driveways. I emphasize "streets" because during my numerous emails and phone calls to VDOT, no one seemed to comprehend we were stuck because our streets were blocked with snow, not just driveways. On one of my calls I was asked if our street had been plowed by VDOT during the December snow. I could only gasp that we were expected to have given VDOT credit for plowing snow in December? Sorry if I can't be more grateful because the snow in February was different snow than the snow in December! All around I feel completely let down by VDOT

I spent my first 30 years living in the "snowbelt" of Massachusetts and so I've seen many significant snow falls and experienced treacherous road conditions. Snow removal is never perfect or easy, but I think the snow removal team in my area did a superb job during the February snow event. I was especially pleased with the professional and immediate response I received from Supervisor Frey and VDOT after I reported a public road in Centreville that was still dangerous - the road was quickly cleared to pavement. I wish my community's snow removal team had done as well ;-)

Karen L., Centreville, VA

I reside near the Dunn Loring METRO station and in the past 25 years we have never experienced effective coordination for snow removal on the sidewalks exiting the station and extending north on Gallows, over the bridge, along Stenwood and continuing to Cottage Street. When I have asked this question to the various Providence Supervisors over the years, the response I received is that there are both too many entities involved as well as "no man's land" where no one is responsible.

An understandable but unacceptable response!

I find this unacceptable if we believe in our vision to make our community more pedestrian friendly (and safe) and to reduce our reliance on private vehicles. We are fortunate to live within walking distance from mass transit but we cannot "get there from here".

This past storm was the worst in that METRO snow removal pushed all of their snow away from the station along the sidewalk heading north and piled it up in a huge pile making access to the bridge over I66 completely impassable for weeks. Then along the bridge itself, VDOT pushed the snow from Gallows over the safety wall and onto the sidewalk.

Over the weeks, I observed many pedestrians walking on Gallows Rd in the dark (the lighting along there is another issue) and it is amazing there were no serious injuries.

When we called Supervisor Smyth's office, her staff told us that they were proposing to use non violent offenders to be released from jail to shovel--great idea but we never saw it happened.

I find this ironic as the County has big plans to make Tysons a pedestrian friendly neighborhood and in this existing neighborhood of Dunn Loring, we rely on passive solar snow removal as the strategy.

Please assign some entity to be responsible for the snow removal along this pedestrian path.

Thank you. Dennis Brown

We live in Kings Park and had phenomenal snowplow drivers. The use of front end loaders to move the snow out of the streets was excellent. People need to realize that this happens here rarely, and there is really nowhere to put the snow. The only negative comment I could make is that corners are not the place to pile snow; there are still intersections where the line of sight is very poor. Could the snow be piled up in the middle of a block? But, all things considered, Fairfax County did a great job! Thank you.

I would like to recognize the hard work of VDOT and its contractors in dealing with an unprecedented amount of snow. That being said, I need to express my deep disappointment with how the response to these snowstorms were handled. Let me begin by telling you my story. I have been a resident of Fairfax County since I was four years old. I am also a person with a disability. My mom owns a home in Fairfax in Providence District and I rent a room in a house in Braddock district. Let me start with the first of our major snowstorms in December. By the evening of the end of the first snowstorm we did see a plow in our neighborhood but it had its blade up, and was not plowing our street. The next day I called Supervisor Cook's office to complain and they told me that it was standard operating procedure to only have the plows come through once in a neighborhood. This is unacceptable to me. As I said before, I am a person with a disability and even on a good day, with no snow, no ice, and a level surface, it is challenging for me to walk. The VDOT trucks left about three inches of ice on my street at 4351 Farm House Lane. I also want to mention that it took another five days for me to see another snowplow on our street and make it passable. So for five days I was unable to go to work, go out to get food, or to run other errands. This is simply unacceptable. The only reason that I eventually did see a plow is that I called VDOT. When I called VDOT I was asked if I had a homeowners

association. For the first snow storm in December, my landlord was out of the country and I had no way of finding out if I had a HOA or what its responsibilities are. So my first suggestion is to provide people who are renting with information about HOAs and what does and does not get covered. For example, on the VDOT website you could have a section "Streets owned by a HOA." At least then I would have known whom to contact. I also have to say that after the first snowstorm in December I went to visit my mother for the holidays and noticed that the streets in her neighborhood were A LOT better than the streets in mine. When I called VDOT to inquire as to why I was told that my mom's house and the house that I rent are in two different VDOT districts. My mom's streets were plowed down to pavement. As I said, mine still had 3 inches of ice/snow/slush on them. I also found it unacceptable that EVERY other street EXCEPT my street had been plowed. Once I got out of my neighborhood it was clear to see that other subdivisions had had their streets cleaned much before mine and better.

Now, in terms of the storms in February...having learned my lesson about which streets get plowed and which do not, I purposely got snowed in with my mom. The plows came in my mom's neighborhood very quickly and I was able to get out fairly quickly afterward. I had to go back to the place that I rent to get clothes as by that time, the second storm had been predicted. Again, when I went back to the place that I rent, the street had only been minimally plowed. This was the Monday after a Friday storm. The next day I called Delegate David Bulova's office and State Senator Chap Petersen's office to see what assistance they could provide me. The second storm hit on a Tuesday and by Thursday most of the main roads were clear. VDOT is to be congratulated for that. However, even at my mother's place, which had been well taken care of until now, was left with a 3 inch cap of ice. I had some friends come pick me up to take me out and I can report to you that their car got stuck on the street where my mom lives. I went back to the place I rent in Braddock District on the Saturday following the storm. I was most pleased to see backhoes removing the ice but again, at that point it had been four days since the storm hit. VDOT said on its website that it wanted to make all the streets passable within 48 hours. Another suggestion is for VDOT to define what they mean by "passable." While the road in front of the house that I rent was "passable" it was not safe to drive on it due to all the ice. I did fishtail on the hills in my neighborhood.

It is now March 4th and I am sad to report that I have yet to go back to the place that I rent because of the threat of more "wintery weather" that we have had in the weeks following the snow in February. I do plan on buying a house at some point in Fairfax County and given my experience this year I know that I will not buy one in Braddock district.

For your information I have included my mother's address and the address of the house that I rent:

Mother's Address: Robin Ridge Ct. Fairfax, VA 22031

Place I rent: Farm House Lane, Fairfax, VA 22032

I would like to point out to you that these addresses are approximately six miles apart. It is a very big disappointment that two places that are so close to each other would have such different responses to the snow.

Thank you for your time.

Alexandra Dixon

Snow removal from roads in my area (South Run Rd, Lorton) was terrific. Kudos to the plowing of the county, state (and my HOA). South Run, Silverbrook and Pohick were well maintained. However, a lot of the snow was dumped on the side walks. I wish the county realized that many people depend on the side-walks. Children and workers need to get to the bus, dogs needs to be walked, and many people like to work-out one way or another on the side-walk. I

It is important for snow removal teams (both county, state and HOA) to realize that side-walks can become blocked for weeks when snow is dumped on the side-walk. If I am not mistaken, Fairfax Schools stayed an extra day closed because bus stops were not safe. Clearly, this is undesirable. Near my house, I shoveled a little pathway to access the road. It got blocked three times by snow plows. My little shovel is no match for a V-DOT plow.

It has taken until this week for most (not all) side-walks on South Run to become walkable again.

I would strongly recommend that the county create some rules on how to prevent blocked side-walks. Snow could be removed to one side of the street, blocking only one side-walk. Wide roads could be partially plowed, so that pedestrians can dig themselves out. There could be an ordinance against piling up snow on the side-walk near intersections. I am no expert, but I am sure a decent solution can be found.

Furthermore, I am not aware of the county or state having rules about snow removal on side-walks. In local press (notably greatergreaterwashington.org), I've seen that DC and PG County actually have rules, and Alexandria has some ordinances. It would be nice if Fairfax would also require folks to shovel the side-walk around their property. Enforcement is not as important as just having the rule. In case of future snow emergencies, authorities could just remind folks of the rules. Psychologically it's better to be able to remind your neighbor of the law, than to have to rely on his/her niceness.

Thank you for your attention,

Jasper Nijdam, Lorton

We live in the vicinity of Franconia and Telegraph Road on the Marl Pat Drive cul-de-sac. During the February 2010 snowstorm we had 22 inches of snow. We also experienced a power loss for about 11 hours with the temperature dropping from 68 to 45 degrees in our all brick house. No problem, Dominion got the power back the same day, as soon as they were physically able to. A day or two later, we lost water for 12 hours due to a break in the water main a block and a half south on Telegraph Road. No problem, we ran a tub full of water upon noticing low pressure and Fairfax Water restored pressure quickly the same day. Despite the depth of snow, our street was made passable for emergency vehicles with a sufficient single lane in 24 hours due to the plowing efforts of VDOT contractors and especially to the fine shoveling of walk, drive, and street by my wife (I recently had surgery on my hand). We lost a number of tree tops and limbs on some the dozen trees on our property with no other property damage.

We feel blessed to have had such very minor consequences and to have been provided such prompt and efficient restoration services by Dominion Power, Fairfax Water, and VDOT contractor personnel. We received great value for our utility and tax dollars. Our sentiments go to those in the rest of the world who really suffered from catastrophic natural and man-made disasters during the same period in Afghanistan, Haiti, and Chile. What a privilege to live in a place like Fairfax County!

Ken and Helen Clare

We live in an area that does not have sidewalks. The only place to walk is in on the edge of the road. There are many senior citizens who live in our neighborhood as it was built in the late 50s to early 60s. Our streets are not usually plowed until every other street is cleared out. Some people work in construction so they took out bobcats and tried to clean the roads somewhat. Enough of the top layers of snow were cleared so that if you had a high clearance SUV or truck you could get out, but cars and lower clearance vehicles were getting stuck and we were having to push them out. Once some of the snow melted and people were driving on it we were in bigger trouble than ever. It was worse than driving on the off road test track at Aberdeen Proving Grounds. VDOT had a recording saying that some ruts were to be expected but I thought that I was going to damage both my car and my body even at 2 miles per hour. It was not some ruts it was one continuous jarring rut. Since schools were finally open I had to drive my children to school as all other methods were clearly not an option. They said it was dangerous to walk on Tuesday so they delayed opening school to 9:30 which helped with it not being as slippery. I was shocked when they decided on Wednesday that somehow or other it had gotten somehow safer and school could start on time. That was ridiculous. I finally became impatient at this point with VDOT and emailed a complaint and in talking with my neighbors it seemed a number of them also complained. Somebody finally came in on Thursday and cleared the roads to an acceptable level. They did not clear our roads until almost 2 weeks after the storms. We do not live in the country or far off the beaten track. We are Walhaven subdivision just off Franconia and Beulah. Most of us did our driveways continuously and therefore they were cleared long before the streets. If Saturday morning they had taken aswipe down the side streets then maybe they might not have been so hard to do later and expensive since they literally had to scrape the combined ice and snow off the road foot by foot. Many of my neighbors either could not get home to their homes or go out. I have a dog and the only place to take her out was on the street and I was constantly terrifeid that I would slip and fall and die somewhere out there on the street. I have lived in VA for almost 30 years and I don't expect much from VDOT but this exceded no expectations. It was miserable. I think that one week would have been reasonable but this was inexcusable. When I meet a school bus on the road we both were going about 2 mph and shaking our heads at one another. The students who did walk to Edison High School were walking on Franconia road hoping not to be hit by a vehicle. For weeks after the storm every time i had to pull out onto Higham to Franconia road a prayed that there was not a car coming that I could not see over the piles of snow on the corners. Summary: Unsafe for students, teachers, parents, elderly, pets. Noone was safe in this storm and its aftermath. The stateshould have asked for help from NY as they missed the storm and they had the equipment to deal with it. Safety has to win.

It makes no sense to send out small pick up trucks with tiny plows into the neighborhood to do half a job. The tiny pick up barely scraped a few inches off the top and quickly left us to deal with the rest it. The result is that the remainder of the snow in our neighborhood was compacted by vehicles and turned into ice that was so deeply rutted that our middle school bus driver would not go into our neighborhood. For a week, it was like going on safari every time we had to leave the neighborhood. and I'm sure my car shocks suffered. At one point, a big truck equipped with a plow just dumped sand on our street and did absolutely NO scraping. Please do it right next time or don't bother.

Bonnie Horowitz, Oakton, VA 22124

Our street was plowed the Friday night as the first snow storm was hitting around 8pm, but was *never* plowed again after that. Using snow shovels, our block plowed out a working one way out of our cul-de-sac. It took around 13 people and a good part of a day. We live at 9100 Joyce Phillip Court, Springfield. Why did it seem as if Springfield was so over-looked with the VDOT plows?

Thanks, Sarah King

I live pretty close to government center 11201 , the experience has been quite good. I don't really think that you would have done any better to combat the amount of snow that fell on the ground. Day and Night the clearance was done in a timely manner ..that's a different thing that yet we could not drive because of ice formation on the road.

I am pleased with the way your team has dilligently worked in snow removal process considering that in fairfax region it never snowed this much over the last 3 decades. Thank you to everyone who has contributed in this effort. Good job :)

I tend to trust that the (insert name of gov't entity) is doing the best it can to get to the plowing, which I offer to suggest that I'm not one to rant. That said, though we were thrilled when we finally got front end loaders to come scrape up the disastrously packed combination of ice and snow nearly two weeks after snowmageddon began, they came at 3:45 in the morning to a very small residential neighborhood (Lee Boulevard Heights) -- which meant banging and scraping and back-up beeping and bright high beams in our windows in the wee wee hours of the morning (for two hours within hearing distance of my house).

And though I can understand some lawn damage is inevitable with this much snow, I watched as the driver disregarded blatantly obvious clues about separation of church and yard (e.g., end of driveways were visible). He ripped up paved and graveled parking pads, as much as 6' from the street of many lawns and wood barriers and drove the tractor through many years, leaving feet-deep ruts and tire tracks. Even as the first bucket load dumped asphalt to the top of snow piles, he often went back in for more. Thousands of dollars (and hours to repair) of personal property damage in our neighborhood, alone, from the plows.

Here's a copy of an email I sent to Delegate Scott Surovell and his assistant Chris Bea regarding location: Hensley Court, Alexandria, 22308

Delegate Scott Surovell and Chris Bea, Legislative Assistant

Now that the immediate snow crisis is behind us, I wanted to follow-up on a snow plowing issue that my neighbors have been experiencing on Hensley Court, a cul-de-sac of five homes off William and Mary Dr, which intersects with Collingwood Road.

Here's an excerpt of an email from one of my neighbors on Hensley Ct, which he sent on Monday, Feb 8 --- a full two days after the first storm hit.

"I previously mentioned that Hensley Ct seems to be skipped in the snow removal process. And per your response, we need to have patience. Understood; however, it would be one thing if no other streets in Williamsburg Manor were plowed with the exception perhaps of W&M Drive. In this case however, every other street, including Governor's Ct, has at least a lane plowed out. Meanwhile, Hensley Ct residents have no means to exit.

In an effort to move forward the process, my wife called the Fairfax Snow Removal hot line number you sent out, but no one answered. Per their website, their number won't be active until Wednesday, and that may not help us either because of the next front coming through Tuesday night. I also called whom I thought was the VDOT contractor for this area - MowCow Services, whose trucks I'm sure I have seen in the neighborhood and along Collingwood. However, they stated our streets are not in their system. The dispatcher was very kind and would have dispatched a truck if we were part of their contract, but apparently Williamsburg Manor is not. It could be that there is another contractor for this area."

My neighbors and I understand this was a record storm and VDOT (and its contractors) were overwhelmed. Numerous phone calls (which were of no use) and numerous emails (which were responded to by VDOT) indicating that our request for service for Hensley Ct was logged into the system. However, Hensley was not plowed for the very first time until sometime Weds nite or early Thursday morning (Feb 11) after the second storm hit.

Our concern is that for some reason, Hensley Court does not appear to be part of the snow plowing contract for the contractor (MowCow) who was clearing William and Mary Dr, as well as the other streets in neighborhood that intersect with William & Mary. Hensley Court is the smallest cul-del-sac in our neighborhood and we are at a loss to understand why it isn't plowed at same time as our other streets. I can't imagine that VDOT is excluding Hensley Ct on purpose. The only rational explanation I can think of is that Hensley Court did not exist when our neighborhood and streets were built in the early 1960's. Hensley Court was developed much later in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Perhaps VDOT has not updated their maps or how they award their snow plowing contracts. Appreciate it if you would look into this and let us know what can be done to include Hensley Court when William and Mary Dr and its other intersecting streets are plowed before the next snow storm hits.

Greg Crider

P.S. I've copied some of my neighbors on Hensley Ct, as well as Gerry Hyland and his staff, to let them know of our request. I expect as our elected officials you are all getting a number of similar requests. So it might be more effective to treat them all together when pursuing this issue with VDOT so they can be more effective (and responsive) when the next snow storm hits.

My family and I live in the Windsor Estates neighborhood off Beulah St. After the first storm our neighborhood did not receive any plowing until the Monday after the storm. The plow effort was poor at best. So after the second storm, the roads in our neighborhood became impassable to just about every car in the neighborhood. Most residents in the neighborhood became stuck at least once either trying to exit or enter the neighborhood. Including myself. We are fortunate that we own a SUV that husband could use to get to work. The day after the second storm our family went out to do some errands, in our SUV. We went about 3 houses down the street and noticed that our mailman's truck was stuck in a snowbank. We were able to use the SUV to pull his truck out. One week after the first storm, VDOT sanded all the streets in our neighborhood. Unfortunately, with the thaw and refreezes this made the streets worse rather than better. Presidents day night, we received a call from our son's elementary school that bus would only be able to pick up at the entrance to the neighborhood. My husband who had taken the call told the school that it was a good thing. A school bus would not have made it through the neighborhood. When we woke up the next morning, we found that the entire neighborhood had been plowed to bare pavement.

REQUIRE HOAs to shovel common area sidewalks. The county needs to do a MUCH better job on keeping Fairfax county Parkway clear. It was atrocious throughout, and is a MAJOR thoroughfare.

The snow was fun for the kids. Thankful that we did not lose power. Unfortunately, our neighborhood was very slow to be cleared of snow. Our streets were passable after a few days but there was only one lane and there were huge pot holes and still very icy conditions for at least 11 days when VDOT came through. Not sure why our neighborhood was neglected by snowplows. Lees Corner Rd between Rt. 50 & Poplar Tree was not cleared until Feb 17-18 (11 days after heavy snow started) and Brookfield neighborhood.

While I realize that snow plow drivers are hired contractor's, they certainly should be considerate of the people out there clearing their driveways (on side streets). Not only do they come by and mess up the street, they continuously block your drive way. They purposely turn the plow toward your driveway as opposed to away from your driveway. When VDOT came by, they at least turned the plow opposite the driveway. My husband is in his 70's and I cannot tell you how many times we had to dig the driveway. I had an opportunity to stop the contractor and ask if he was coming back by to clear the mess he made, he said yes, but low and behold he drove away and left the mess. We had to shovel the street when he left mounds of snow that you could not drive over.

We live at the corner of Telegraph and Hayfield Roads, and were very impressed with snow removal. The back pathway through Old Telegraph Rd was extremely well maintained. Basic clearing happened quickly, and I was amazed to see the front loaders out the next few days lifting snow from turn lanes up to the curb. Our neighborhood, as a group, took care of driveways and side roads well.

The only concern we had was the delay in clearing school bus routes. We helped dig out Hayfield Elementary, but sidewalks needed for bus routes were buried under plow heaps and blocked by parked cars. Maybe it would have helped if school bus routes had signs similar to city bus stops, so plows could be aware of them as they cleared. We could have easily taken care of the sidewalk ourselves as a community if it had not been under a 20 ft. pile!

A man on our block died of a heart attack. His death may have been avoided if the ambulance could have gotten to his house. The first ambulance arrived taking the hilly approach and got stuck behind 4 vehicles that could not move because they were stuck. (I don't know why the ambulance came from that direction). Another ambulance was sent 20 minutes or so later from another direction which is a flat road to his house. House is located at the bottom of the hill on the corner. This ambulance got stuck about a block from the house because in trying to drive around an abandon car in the middle of the road it drove off the road and sunk down into mud beneath the snow which hid where the road ended.

The issue I want to address is poor judgment of citizen drivers that were out in vehicles with LOW CLEARANCE (4 wheel drive doesn't help much if you only have 1 foot clearance and the snow is 2 feet.) or otherwise not adequate to the conditions. Also people who make no effort to leave car where others can move around it. Perhaps GUIDELINES FOR DRIVING in extreme conditions are needed for the inexperienced and people lacking common sense. These could be publicized before a predicted snowstorm. Had it not been for the obstructing vehicles, the ambulance could have made it thru and perhaps saved a life. Another lesson is that rescue vehicles should plan their route with knowledge of the terrain.

Hollin Hills, Fairfax County

I live on Wood Grouse Court, Burke. During this winter's snow storms, plowing did not occur on my street until over one week following the last snowfall in February. Residents living on Wood Grouse Court had to shovel snow off the street by hand in order to get 4 x 4 vehicles out. Those neighbors without trucks were not able to get in or out of the street.

After 3 emails to VDOT and several calls, VDOT finally dispatched a plow. When the plow came down Wood Grouse Court it got stuck 3 different times. I had to supply the truck driver with a shovel in order for him to dig his tires out of the snow and slush so that he could get his truck out of the Court. He reported to me that he was told by VDOT managers that the street had already been plowed (this was not the case) and he was only to spread a top layer of dirt. He called into VDOT to report that the road had in fact NOT been plowed.

I'm not sure how VDOT could have thought the road had been plowed when Channel 7 news had been on our street two days prior reporting that the street had not been plowed. As a matter of fact, Channel 7 news got stuck on our street when they drove down to cover the story.

the main roads were well treated. However, the neighborhood streets were treacherous and inaccessible. This left residents in an unsafe situation. If a VDOT plow got stuck, I doubt any emergency vehicles could have made it in or out of street without getting stuck.

If VDOT had plows coming through the neighborhood during the snowfall the accumulation on the roads would not have gotten to the point that was unmanageable for a plow.

Also, since my neighborhood is within the Burke Centre Conservancy, I am curious as to why the Conservancy is not permitted to plow my street. There were many plows available but they aren't permitted down my street because it is a State road? This makes no sense.

It wasn't until a contractor from NY arrived with a front loader that our street finally got plowed sufficiently enough for vehicles to get in and out of street.

I live in an over 55 community at Saintsbury Plaza and it is wonderful that the metro is half a mile up the road. But during the blizzard and the following snow storms it was a hardship for us old folks to shovel out our cars. Why can't we legally have permission to park our cars at the Vienna Metro garage? I am willing to pay to park there so that I won't have to shovel my car out.

Why isn't the garage open to public parking for surrounding residents? I know some residents may park there from time to time but always having the fear of the car being towed or fined. Can't you make it legal for local residents to buy passes to park at the garage? Especially during the evening and overnight. Unfortunately our builder thought us old people won't have visitors because we have less than 10 guest parking spaces for 110 units. And some units own 2 cars. Builder certainly did not think of having underground parking for all the units, only built 38 parking garages and the rest of us out in the open.

I'm sure some people won't mind paying a nominal fee to park at the metro garage and it will be another way for you to make some revenue.

Parklawn Neighborhood - Alexandria, VA, Mason District.

It took 3 days for a plow to come after the first storm. We shoveled ourselves out of our own street on day 8 - or so.... the day before the next storm. Then we shoveled ourselves out again. Finally after realizing that we were getting the shaft, the civic association emailed vdot and then Kaye Kory's office call Vdot on our behalf and finally saw front end loaders and got cleared out.

The national guard had to come take someone in our neighborhood to dialysis. Someone else had to pay a plow to come and take him to brain surgery.

From first snow til the day we finally had our neighborhood properly plowed, it took 12 days. Of those 12 days, it was impossible for us to leave our homes for 6.

Because we had no plowing after the first snow, the streets were literally covered with a 6 inch sheet of ice. My husband, a small business owner missed thousands of dollars in revenue because of his inability to get to jobs. I missed 3 medical appointments, and 6 days of work.

While our delegates and councilmembers did everything within thier power to help us, we were at the mercy of VDOT, who very plainly put, failed us in every way. A truly grossly inadequate response, and substandard service.

Below is an e-mail I sent last week to Supervisor Cook...

Supervisor Cook:

I want to thank you for keeping us up-to-date on the ongoing snow removal efforts during the recent back-to-back snowstorms. The information that you and your office provided was helpful as we and all of your constituents waited (sometimes not to patiently...I'm afraid) for news and, more importantly, for the plows to show up.

Now that the snow is gradually disappearing, I wanted to call to your attention some of the damage left behind by those responsible for the snow removal. In our neighborhood (we live at the intersection of Ponderosa Drive and Ventura Lane near Canterbury Woods Elementary School) we had succeeded, until the plows arrived, in keeping the sidewalks open for the kids when they returned to school. When the snow plows finally arrived in the neighborhood, however, they were apparently given the order to plow "curb to curb." Unfortunately, they did more than that, shoving snow up and over the curbs, across lawns and, in some cases, 6-8 feet high on sidewalks. Once those piles were in place, sidewalks simply could not be cleared by shovel and children were forced to walk on the street to bus stops once school resumed.

More importantly, the plows tore up lawns, and broke up curbs and sidewalks. While it was certainly important to get the streets plowed, we are now left with the cost and aggravation of re-sodding or re-seeding parts of our lawns, and the county is left with the cost of repairing damaged curbs and sidewalks. However, given the current economic situation, I'm sure the county is in no position to make those repairs. Instead, I and my neighbors will be left living with the damage, and the eyesore it creates for both those who live here and visit and, if and when we choose to move, reduced home values as a result of the damage.

I would like to invite you to come out and let me show you the damage caused by the sloppy and unprofessional snow plowing efforts. I really don't know if there is anything that can (or will) be done about it at this point, but I think it's important that you be made aware.

Thanks for listening...

Bob Bissen, Annandale, VA

I live in Annandale, VA. Our roads were not plowed until Sunday night, February 14th. As the President of our HOA, I had contracted with a private company to plow our street, Farr Street, at a cost of \$1,100 on Wednesday, February 10th. Numerous drivers were getting stuck. No one could get to work, get to healthcare facilities, or to grocery stores. When the snowplow came through on the 14th, they essentially reversed the work that the HOA had paid to complete. We had dry pavement for a little better than one lane. The snowplowers redistributed the snow, blocked all of our driveways, filled in the sidewalks that I had personally cleared so that people would not be forced to walk in the middle of the road, and the crews spread this awful mess of sand, gravel, and who knows what else. Just yesterday I spent two hours sweeping and shoveling that material from the front of my house and along the curb; this resulted in three wheelbarrows full of this material. And, I have no idea what the contents are of this material, and therefore, do not know the best disposition of it. Does it contain salt? If so, I don't want to put it in my yard, or in a location that will run off into the Chesapeake Bay. More information would be helpful.

Please do not pile snow on any sidewalks or crosswalks! I realize that we had an unprecedented amount of snow this winter, but we must decide on a better way of removing it! We shoveled diligently this winter to make sure our neighborhood children had clear passage to get to the bus stops and elementary school. Because VDOT made the decision to clear the streets completely and pile the snow 4-8 feet on our shoveled sidewalks, we are still walking in the streets (big public safety concern!). Since this happened, many neighbors have stated that they will not be clearing their sidewalks in the future. I wish VDOT or county officials could have consulted the citizens before this took place. As I drive around the county, I see that snow piled on sidewalks only happened in some areas...apparently not a county mandate. It was also very frustrating to see them filling our sidewalks with snow, breaking the concrete curbs, tearing up our grass, and breaking bushes that are on our property (not state property)...and at the same time, many major roads still had lanes blocked. I'm sure they could have been clearing those lanes in the middle of the night rather than keeping us awake while they removed every speck of snow and sand (put down by VDOT the night before) in front of our house. I will be glad to give you specifics if you need them. I contacted many state and local officials regarding this matter...some were professional enough to email me back, other did not bother. In closing, I might add that we were very pleased with VDOT's work the first time they came through our neighborhood...fivedays after the storm ended. No one complained about that. They cleared 2 1/2 lanes for us and put down sand. It was perfect! Everyone was able to get out of the neighborhood.

Thank you for listening. Janet Peterson

My husband had hip replacement surgery and was unable to shovel snow. I tried but the depth and weight of the snow prevented me from accomplishing much.

Three times my wonderful neighbors shoveled our driveway, walks, and the space in front of our mailbox. They were lifesavers.

Then the snowplow came and shoved a mountain of snow in front of the mail boxes on the street as well as covered the cleared walks with snow too high to move.

I think the idea of fining people for not removing snow is unfair, not to mention ridiculous when the county plows cover up already cleared walkways.

I am a student at Northern Virginia Community College. I use a wheelchair to travel around the community. The last snow storm that we had, wrecked the sidewalk at the intersection in front of the Circle Towers Apartment Complex entrance and Lee Highway. I have concern about the sidewalk. It has a hole that people can fall in or some disabled people who use wheelchairs have difficulty getting across to the bus stop. The sidewalk/ storm drain has a big hole that needs reconstructing. By the way, the Sidewalk is owned by VDOT. Could you possibly repair this problem soon?

Thank you, Numan Aslam

I completely understand that the February snowstorms were historic and like anything we've ever experienced. I've lived in Northern Virginia my entire life, and I recall some pretty big storms, but nothing like this past Winter. Having said that, it was incredibly frustrating that our street was not plowed AT ALL after the first storm. The first plows did not arrive until the day after the second storm, and then the street was barely passable - although a huge improvement from not having been plowed at all. The next day (Friday, February 12th), bobcats arrived to remove the snow. The pile of snow in front of our house was so large, we named it Mt. Ward. Not only did the crew pile this enormous mound of snow on the sidewalk, but they also piled it on our landscaping, completely crushing several shrubs. We have not yet obtained estimates, but based on the cost of the shrubs at the time they were planted 2 years ago, we are probably looking at a removal and replacement job of \$500+. How can we, as residents, be "asked" to clear our sidewalks when the crews are piling the snow on the sidewalks? The mound of snow was too large to even consider moving, but even if we could, the snow would have had to have gone back into the street. Why couldn't the crew have simply piled it in the street, along side the curb rather than on the sidewalk and in our yard? Pictures can be provided upon request. As I said at the beginning, I understand this was an enormous task, and that we all had to wait our turn, but what if there had been a medical emergency or fire during this time? As it was, we were unable to report to work for a week. And my husband is paid hourly - if he doesn't work, he doesn't get paid. Our "turn" was a LONG time coming, and once it did come around, the job that was done was poor. We deserve more for our hard-earned tax dollars.

Tina Ward, Springfield, VA

Our neighborhood was only plowed 1 time of the 3 major storms. One time, all the neighbors on our street actually paid a private contractor to plow so we would be able to leave the neighborhood. The February storms happened during a time where we were dealing with serious medical issues and it was very frightening to be unsure if we would be able to receive emergency medical care if needed. Fortunately, we did not require emergency care, but it was very disappointing to me to be completely unsure about when (rather, if) we would be plowed. I understand the issues involved regarding equipment, training and simply being overwhelmed by the storms, however, as a taxpayer, I feel entitled to know what to expect. I would be more

comfortable being told that cul de sacs will not be plowed, so we could contract with a private plower to ensure we are cleared than the current situation where if we are plowed seems completely random.

In an effort to be good citizens, we cleared the fire hydrant in front of our house as well as the sidewalk. But, many of our neighbors did not do this. The street we use to reach a main road had cars parked on both sides of it and was effectively a one lane road for weeks after the storm which nearly resulted in an accident for me because the street is a steep hill and it was impossible to see oncoming traffic.

Overall, I applaud Fairfax County for it's communication efforts before, during and after the storms. I regret much of the criticism the county is receiving from angry taxpayers who do not understand how much the county actually did for us. Thank you for considering my feedback.

I know my neighborhood is not a top priority for snow removal because it is purely residential and most of the streets end in cul-de-sacs. Yet when a truck with a plow comes by two or three days after a major snowstorm, I expect it to plow. Instead, the truck that arrived after the first February storm held the blade just above the snow and merely flattened the ridges, leaving my street still covered with inches of snow and ice. The truck also apparently ran out of sand on a neighboring street and never came back to take care of our street. More than a week later, on a Friday evening, I heard loud noises on the street and looked out to see a genuine snowplow finally clearing the snow down to the pavement. I was lucky to be able to telecommute the entire week of the February snowstorms, because my little Prius would not have made it out of our development any sooner.

Sarah J. Abrams, Springfield, VA

Being left unplowed for over a week is just not acceptable on any planet!!! The fact that emergency services could not reach us and we could not get to them borders on emotionally abuse by the state of Virginia!! My state tax money should guarantee that basic services will be provided. Snow is not an emergency - it's VDOT's ineffective response that created the disaster we all lived with in Fairfax County.

I was unable to get prescription medicine that was at the Post Office and had to cancel doctor appointments.

My husband lost 4 days leave from work. He suffers from severe arthritis and walks with a limp. He had to walk 2 miles in deep snow for 2 days to hire a rental car (losing more money) to finally get to work.

The fact that senior citizens (or any citizen) should be left in such dire straits in the 2nd richest county in the nation is simply unacceptable.

VDOT's plan MUST change. It's ineffective even in 5 inches of snow!! That Fairfax schools lose so many days to snow cannot be tolerated. Subdivisions must get an inbound and outbound pass through (especially school bus routes) while main arteries are also being plowed. They shouldn't waste tax money on these little trucks that accomplish nothing-the construction companies have plenty of idle equipment to hire in the winter (use it)!!!

The Greenbriar neighborhood was one of the last to be cleared I think. I was surprised that even the intersection with Stringfellow was not touched for days.

I would suggest primary neighborhood streets get priority - for our area that would be Melville, Middle Ridge, Poplar Tree, Point Pleasant and Majestic. This would have helped a lot.

Require sidewalks to be cleared (48 hrs) and prohibit VDOT from plowing sidewalks shut - this would help get kids back to school, and miss fewer days.

At the same time it was a record snow - do not waste too much time and money analyzing, budgeting and planning.

I was very pleased with the VDOT snow plow operator who first plowed our street. He navigated through the parked cars, tried to maximize the cleared lane, tried not to block driveways, and even avoided children (and adults) playing and walking in the streets (three adults even fell down in front of him while trying to cross when they should have waited).

Overall, this has been the best snow clearing we have seen since we moved here 12 years ago.

The day after the blizzard, my wife had to call the 911 for an emergency for me and the emergency vehicles could NOT get down the street we live on 'cause the snow was too deep. I had to be taken to the hospital. As soon as the snow started to fall, I put in a work order on VDOT's website to have the street plowed, as I do every snow event but nothing was done. If this had been a life or death situation, well... I think request such as these should be taken a little more seriously in the future.

I work for the Department of Housing and Community Development. After the storm the road into our complex was never plowed and being a hill it was quite a treacherous ride down Pender Drive. I know the county doesn't plow the roads, but it might be able to suggest to VDOT that roads with County Agencies on it be part of their first priority. The fact was that Pender Drive wasn't plowed at all for an entire week. Asking employees to come in to work when their cars were bottoming out and sliding sideways for a week is a bit ridiculous. I do understand this was extreme circumstances, but still feel that as a county employee our agency should have been acknowledged and the road should have been plowed in a more timely manner. I would seriously question if other "outside" agencies had the same issue.

The initial plowing still left many roads unpassable, especially at night when they got icy and there was no salt on the roads. The most annoying experiences I had were:

1) the pile up of snow on the sidewalks when the plows came through the second time. It' still there in a lot of places, combined with dirt from the roads, fallen trees, making it extremely difficult even today (3/11) in places to walk on the sidewalks, as things will be fine and then you come to a packed mess of ice. I've seen "broken" sidewalks" from some of the plows, which will require more money spent on infrastructure.

2) Parts of the school system not cleaning their sidewalks -- they shoveled some and then just stopped. For example, Falls Church HS sponsored some major event last Saturday and people were parked all along the street and the Catholic Church's parking lot behind the school -- yet those who parked closer to FCHS had to walk in the street to get to the activity because the sidewalks were not cleared. Why couldn't they have a school service after-school event and have students and some teachers clear the sidewalks. Plus, they had gotten a contractor in to plow the parking lot, who was at it from the beginning of the first February storm throughout -- yet the contractor piled much of the snow very high on the road leading to Providence Rec Center. That, in conjunction where VDOT pushed all their snow to from Jaguar Drive, left that road to Providence inaccessible, so that when the Park Authority maintenance people came to clear the Rec Center parking lot, they had to go through extra hoops to just get to the Rec Center. It would seem that all the different players were not communicating and had not done much planning in advance so that one player did not inconvenience another in the performance of their jobs. While this kind of snow doesn't happen very often here, it might well serve those involved in conducting exercises together as to how they would handle this in the future (tabletop exercises)

3) I'm not current on FX County law on this, but why were drivers not cited by the police for driving sometime with nearly a foot of snow on their car roofs, which then slid off and smacked other cars or created hazards in the road and some accidents?

During the first Feb blizzard, a tree fell from the side of our property into the street and took down the power line. The power company came cut the tree, fixed the power line and said that VDOT would come by to pick up the tree that was in the street. The second storm hit and covered the tree largely. About a week and half later, a bulldozer finally came and made the street passable by 2 cars by shoving all the snow to the top of our yard, including the fallen tree. One month later, VDOT has not come by to pick up the tree, branches, etc.

It took about a week and a half for a bulldozer to come and clear the road of frozen snow and make Carriage Hill neighborhood passable by 2 cars, this was too long, esp when nearby neighborhoods were cleared within a week.

I live at the Rotonda in Tysons Corner Va. It is a condo community that is about 30+ years old with approx 1,148 units and about 4,000 Residents. I enjoy living there because I choose not to drive and I work for a world wide shipping company that has an office near where I live. I have lived in this area since 1974 and I realize that this past winter was the worst ever in this state. My complaint is that while the state and county took care of the roads not a single effort was made for the pedestrians. Not a single sidewalk was cleared in the month + since the last storm. For folks who needed to get around on foot we were forced to use the street which is totally unacceptable.

I agree that within 24 to 48 hours in the County of Fairfax it is suggested that all sidewalks are to be cleared by citizens and businesses however, there is no law requiring for that to happen. I feel that for future storms it should be mandated that all sidewalks be cleared within 24 to 48 hours. I feel that a fine system be setup to enforce this. It should be broken into 2 categories 1 for residents and a 2 for business with higher fines. I also feel that the fines collected should be used by the state or county to pay for snow removal of sidewalks. I also feel that business and residents who ignore this should have action taken against them.

Thank you for your time. Stephen Daniher

Thank you for gathering feedback on this winter's snow removal in Fairfax County. As embarrassing as this February's response was, it did not come as a surprise. In my neighborhood, we are used to seeing very little to no response to the snow - light, moderate or heavy. The only way we've found we can get a snow response from VDOT is to email them directly and ask them for assistance. This will usually elicit a "don't expect curb to curb clearing or bare pavement" response and then they send a truck that spreads dirt on top of packed snow and ice 3-4 days after a storm the ended - but that's about the best we've come to expect in our 15 years living here.

Recent Storms:

In the snowstorm of December 2009, my neighborhood had not been plowed and a Fairfax County fire engine got stuck responding to a call and could not get out of our neighborhood for about 20 minutes. I have video of this if anyone is interested.

For the storms in February, 5 days after the snow had stopped, we had still not seen a plow. The government was open for business and my employer was expecting me to be at work, yet my neighborhood streets were still not passable unless you had AWD or lived at the very front of our development. On that Friday (snow stopped on Sunday), a large truck attempted to make a delivery and got stuck. For over an hour, nobody could get in or out of our community including USPS, FEDEX and residents. Some residents who had children to pick up or were frustrated because they didn't know what else to do, called 911 for assistance. Many of us wrote to our County Supervisor or VDOT that evening and help was dispatched to clear a path in our neighborhood that night. However, the snow had been packed for so long, the center of the street remained ice covered for another two weeks.

Is there any doubt that it would cost the state less money to be more proactive with snow removal? Is there any doubt that the state's snow removal plan is not effective? Is there any doubt the citizens of this county and state expect and deserve better? I don't think so.

This is in sharp contrast to the rapid and effective response I always saw in the 25 years I lived in Howard County, Maryland. Regardless of snow amount, neighborhoods were ALWAYS cleared and multiple passes were made by the plows during heavy storms to keep the snow from packing down. We should look to neighboring states and consider adopting their snow removal strategies.

Thank you for your efforts in trying to improve the situation so things improve moving forward.

Regards, Doug Lerner, Middleton Farm, Oak Hill

I live on Bennett Farms Court, Herndon (Oak Hill). We never get plowed until the very end! We must be last on the list! It took 5 days to see a plow. We finally got the neighbors together and collected 800.00 to pay a farmer with a front loader to come into our neighborhood. So much for tax dollars!

Diane Novick

Even before February 19 our street, Nealon Dr., had been plowed and was passable, although much of it was still covered with a layer of compacted snow. Until then, we had no reason to complain about VDOT's response to this winter's unprecedented snowfall. Then, on February 19, VDOT returned and began clearing the compacted snow. Instead of dumping the newly scraped snow more or less evenly on the easements along the length of the street, the equipment operators created a few large piles, one of which was in front of my house. Our pile, six feet high and twelve to fifteen feet wide, covered the easement, the sidewalk, and extended about four feet into our front yard. I had spent a fair amount of time and effort clearing the sidewalk only to have this mess dumped on it, completely blocking it. VDOT did this despite requests from the County to residents to clear sidewalks as a safety measure, particularly for the children who were at last returning to school.

There are two annoying problems. The first arises from the fact that not just snow but bits of the road surface (at any rate, something black and asphalt-like) were scraped up and included in the pile. As the snow has melted, some of this is now lying on our yard. If this material—there's actually quite a lot of it; the snow pile that remains is almost completely covered with it—kills the grass or otherwise contaminates the soil, will VDOT reimburse us for resodding? The second is VDOT's indifference to our concerns. On February 19 I contacted Supervisor Gross, and she in turn contacted VDOT on our behalf. My wife happened to see a VDOT truck stop in front of our house briefly on February 23. Two men got out, took a look at the pile, then reboarded their truck and left. Whether this was in response to Supervisor Gross I have no idea; regardless, as of March 5, when I last checked, her office had heard nothing from VDOT; we have heard nothing from VDOT as of today, March 11.

All that, however, is by the way, for there is one serious problem, which is VDOT's disregard for pedestrian safety by blocking the sidewalk in a way beyond my ability to repair their carelessness, thus forcing people to walk in the street where before they had a clear and safe walkway. I can do without an explanation, I can do without reimbursement should our lawn be damaged, but the disregard for safety I believe demands an answer and demands guarantees that it will not happen again.

I live in Huntermill Estates on Brittenford Drive in Vienna, VA and our snow plowing from the State became essentially non-existent this year from November 2009 through the storms of Feb 2010. The plow would come in the development which is essentially one way in and one way out on Brittenford Drive and turn around at Dove Point Court. Our roads are all under the control of the state.

The thing that changed this year is that the public school buss route no longer goes the full length of the street. We were also told by the contractor - Broad Run - that they were told to turn around at Dove Point Court. Problem is that we do not get bus service for our children to private schools and also needed to be able to get out to work and hospitals.

I want to know why this has happened. Our development contacted the state multiple times to no avail. Since we did not get snow removal this yeas we should all get refunds for the portion of our taxes that we pay for that service.

Other cities fine businesses that do not plow the sidewalks in front of their establishments. Place the burden on the business to do so and the city will not carry have to pay for the removal on the sidewalks. I understand this cannot be done right away in larger snowstorms because the businesses may be closed themselves, but having people walk in the streets with cars for so long is dangerous.

Appreciate the quick response in clearing Valley View Dr !! This enabled us to get to Franconia Rd safely. Would have been nice if Tilbury and Cobbs had been cleared ,but at least Valley View was cleared! Thank You- Dick szymanski

I am the president of our home owners association here in Vienna, VA. As many communities in the Fairfax area, we were badly snowed in from the snow storms. VDOT was unable to come to our community for 2 weeks. We had to organize over 30 people to shovel the streets so our community members could get out and go to work (including doctors who had surgeries). VDOT's entire work in our community was limited to opening up the 2 accessways of our community and after all 3 storms , making 1 single pass in the community.

I fully realize that we endured the "storm of the century", but VDOT and its contractors did not help our community virtually at all during the 2 weeks. In the 8 years I have been here, VDOT's work in our community has been poor.

We need to know what we can expect from VDOT in the future given the budget cuts. Will VDOT be able to serve our needs or not?

Regards, Bob Schmid, President, Ashgrove Plantation Community Association

The county did a very good job of clearing Davian Drive in Annandale, apparently because it's a major access route for Annandale High School. The problem is about half of the neighborhood refused to shovel their sidewalks, and earlier this week some of the sidewalks near Annandale Terrace Middle School were still blocked by snow that had been covered by plows.

Medford Drive did not get as much plowing attention, and large stretches of sidewalks were untouched by residents, so students had to walk in the street with traffic that was negotiating slushy snow or ice.

It was my concern a child might be hurt or even killed before people wake up to the effects of their indifference, so I strongly support a requirement that sidewalks be shoveled within a reasonable period of time. Also, plows should be aware of sidewalks near schools and - if necessary - dump on only one side of the street.

First, I think VDOT and its workers and contractors did a heroic job in the big snowstorm of Feb 2010! Second, the main improvement I can think of is to somehow make the public aware of when you will be getting to the neighborhoods. Whatever system VDOT uses to schedule and monitor snow removal crews should allow the public to have an online interface to see where the crews are working and when they are expected into your neighborhood. It's the not knowing when your streets are going to be cleared is what is the hardest - not the wait.

Again, THANK YOU for everything you do to make our streets safe and passable!!

All I can say is shame on the Town of Herndon for their very inept removal of snow. I carpool with someone from South Riding, she commented every morning during the 6-7 days of snow in Feb that the roads in Herndon were the worst anywhere. Not talking about secondary...talking about the ONE LANE Elden Street. Full of snow and ice 4 days after the storm.

I live in Merrifield near the intersection of Rt 50 and Prosperity Avenue. I travel down Rt 50 every day to Arlington for work.

Positives: For the February storm, it looked like VDOT took extra time to ensure all lanes including turn lanes and merges on major roads like RT50 were clean. After the December snow storm many roads were not completely cleared and it was a little dangerous when a lane would disappear under snow or merge lanes were just gone. Better the second time around.

Negatives: My neighborhood at Crestview (West) and Prosperity never got plowed after the February storm. I think we got sanded about 2 weeks after the first storm and there was someone was clearing the intersection of Wynford Drive and Crestview Drive also about 2 weeks later. The rest of Wynford remained untouched.

Even worse was the clearing of the the road to our local school, Fairhill Elementary. The road leading to Fairhill, Chichester Lane, was not plowed at all until AFTER the first day back to school. A small side road (Cherry Lane) was plowed to allow access to the school but only a single lane was opened up. That first day back at school was A MESS! School buses were sent away from the school until after the car traffic cleared. It was good that all the roads to the school were then cleared that night. Who overlooked clearing all the roads in and out of a school?!

Thank you for taking the time to collect this information. A.Cain

It took 5 days for our neighborhood to get plowed.

I live on a cul-de-sac that was completely forgotten until 10 or more days after the storm. In fact, it took contacting Linda Smyth and Sharon Bulova and David Bulova to finally get a plow. Sharon actually visited my home and shortly afterwards a VDOT supervisor visited and said he was ashamed that our road was neglected. My cul-de-sac ends at the top of a hill. My next door neighbor is an 85-year-old widow who was trapped in her home for the duration of this 10-day period. The streets leading up to my cul-de-sac were also neglected and were not addressed until we enlisted the help of Ms Smyth and the Bulovas.

After a full week had passed we were forced to hire a private plow to clear our block so that we could get to work and the supermarket. We had called almost every day, multiple times to request plowing. Three times I was guaranteed that a supervisor would return my call and that never happened. It was only on the 10th day that I finally emailed to complain. I hope you can tell by my note that we were reasonable in our expectations and understood that it would take time to plow our homes. However, days became a week and then more and that is completely unacceptable.

Robert Udowitz, Fairfax, VA 22031

On 20 DEC 2010, eastbound Rt 50 from Nutley St. to the Arlington County border was in mixed condition. From Arlington County border to 7 Corners, though, it was actually really pretty good. The entrance ramp from Rt 50 west bound to Hwy 495 southbound was not too bad, but the exit ramp from southbound Hwy 66 to Braddock Road west bound was awful--lots of packed snow with ruts. It appeared as if it had not been plowed at all. Braddock Road westbound was ok. Olley Lane was in amazing shape. My own streets, Ellenwood Street and Silent Valley Drive, were not too bad.

After the 5 FEB snow, VDOT did a dandy job of clearing Routes 50 and 29. VDOT did a much better job of clearing entrance and exit ramps from 495. Ellenwood St., which feeds into my street, appeared not to have seen a single snowplow during the snow. I contacted Supervisor Smyth regarding the terrible condition of this street on 15 FEB. She responded within three hours to say that she was aware of the problem and had notified VDOT. on 18 FEB, as I drove onto Ellenwood, the sense of dread I'd had about driving on a rutted, icy, lumpy road lifted as I saw a tractor with a bucket and a plow truck working to peel the packed snow from the street. I do wish that there were a way that I could have reported the hazardous conditions on Ellenwood directly to VDOT, or at least seen somewhere that this street was on a to-do list to be cleared. I am grateful to Supervisor Smyth for pursuing the matter on my behalf.

Weather reporting confirms that this was the snowiest winter on record for this area. VDOT did remarkably well. It was tough but I got to know some neighbors better and also got a whole lot of exercise. I love snow, but oh boy, I am glad that the last bit has finally melted from my front yard!

It was a historical storm. I think the govt did the best it could...Mother Nature was overpowering..

None of our streets were plowed adequately. I stayed at my friend's house in Alexandria near the major roads since I didn't want to be trapped on W.George Mason Rd I was smart in doing so W George Mason Rd and nearby roads were icy and snowbound. One can't even walk never mind drive...

When I was out of town, my neighbor told me the Fairfax County front loaders came by to shovel the snow high up onto my yard. Now my front curb is damaged in two places. My brand new driveway is scratched by the front loader in one area. My lawn is probably severely damaged bc of all the snow/salt/sand that the county plow piled onto the top of my front lawn, in attempt to clear the street.

I am not complaining. But please educate us as to how to repair our curbs..whose responsibility, who to report to, what to do with our lawns... How do we get rid of the salt and grime so our grass does not die?

Thanks, Helen Li

Solutions for future snow storms... Hopefully we'll never be overwhelmed again..

Foster the spirit of "We" ..."volunteerism" ...Good deeds to be honored by County or media..

We grew up being spoiled in this "car" "individual" "me first" envt need a wake-up call to keep our streets and sidewalks clear of snow as soon as possible to help one another get around.

Fairfax County needs to educate its residents on the importance of clearing the sidewalks, esp near bus stops.

Better yet, ask neighboring businesses to help keep bus stop areas clear .Give them a tax break for shovelling snow around bus stops... There is no shortage of labor outside Home Depot or 7/11. I saw several with shovels waiting for business.

There are still tons of snow on parking lots. VDOT can asily hire some dayworkers to do the work. Pay out of cash funds. Forget about asking whether they have citizenship. As long as they have a shovel or are strong enough to help remove snow when given a shovel, let them work.

VDOT can work with Fairfax County or Falls Church City to Identify major bus stops and roads nearby. Ask the news stations to make announcements for volunteer shovellers in various neighborhoods near these bus stops ..eg. Lee Hwy/Graham Rd...

...Help people get to the bus stops safelyDrivers will be thankful too.

Thanks, Helen Li

I think home owners should be required to shovel there sidewalks for safety reasons. Thanks, Doug

My inquiry is on the plowing of cu-de-sac's-----why not pile all the snow in the center of the cul-de-sac and drive as a round about does, that way it allows the mailboxes to be accessable, the driveways clean out easier. Buffalo NY uses this technique to keep the curbs free from show piles.

I bike at least 2-3 times a week from Herndon to Tysons Corner, except after it snowed. Since the snow I have biked once, because the clearing snow for cars has take priority over other forms of transport, in fact the snow clearing for cars has had a negative impact on peoples ability to walk, bike or take a bus. During snow clearing side walks are used as a dumping area for snow from roads, huge piles of snow are formed at cross walks forcing pedestrians to walk on roads that are already narrow from snow on the roads. Bike paths were not cleared and bus stops had 4 foot high snow piles making the dangerous to use. I tried crossing the toll road using Wiehle Ave, and was forced to turn back because of a 10 foot snow mound on the bridge blocking the path. which was created by VDOT clearing Wiehle.

I see a huge amount of money being spent of clearing roads for cars, but I don't see any focus on clearing roads to allow people to use mass transit. We should be focusing on creating snow routes that are chosen based on there use Transit not cars. We should then make it a priority to clear side walks and bike paths to allow people to forgo using their car and walk or bike to a transit line, where they can take mass transit. We should be focusing on clearing side walks to allow children to walk safely to school.

As usual, our street (Academy St., Fairfax County) was not plowed in a timely way. We did not have one plowing between December 18 and February 12. During that time at least 36" of snow fell in four storms, including the back-to-back blizzards. When we were plowed on the 12th, there were 26" of snow on the street, which had been impasible for a week. No ambulance or fire equipment could have accessed our street, or many others in our subdivision.

To add insult to injury, when VDOT came back a few days later with front end loaders and Bobcats to clean things out for school bus passage, they gouged, chipped, and potholed some of the local streets, notably Rockbridge Drive, so badly with their equipment that resurfacing will be necessary. Granted that this was a weather situation of historic proportion, VDOT has to work on better planning and more skilled employees and contractors.

Arnold Bradford, Vienna 22180

I live across from Woodson High Scool in Fairfax. What struck me as most absurd about the snow was that the parking lot at Woodson was much clearer than the street (whitacre road) right beside it! There were workers at the high school 14 hours a day making it completely clear to the asphalt, while Whitacre Road had been plowed once and still had six inches of snow on it. People drove through the school parking lot rather than drive on the road. Why was the school so much more capable of clearing roads than VDOT? I assume the

school workers were paid overtime -- why did the school have more money to clean roads than VDOT? For weeks afterwards the school was plowing and removing snow.

Plows should not be making several passes in the same neighborhoods when other neighborhoods have not been touched. This is an unfair waste of resources and unfair to other taxpayers!

We live in the neighborhood of Stonewall Manor, in Fairfax County but NOT in the incorporated Town of Vienna.

The snow response from VDOT was TERRIBLE, if not non-existent.

Our neighborhood has over 250 homes, many with elderly people (original owners) who moved here in the 1960s. There is really only one road in & out of the entire neighborhood, which is Stonewall Drive. I live on that street and I can tell you that it was basically IMPASSABLE for days and days. We had to dig out stuck car after stuck car, every day. At one point, a man in our neighborhood had to call 911 for a heart issue. The ambulance got completely stuck on our street, just one block into the neighborhood. It took a team of ten neighbors over 20 minutes to dig out the ambulance!

We did not see a real VDOT plow for 4 or 5 days. The street was not treated until then, either. Smaller plows operated by concerned neighbors with trucks tried to help, but they got stuck, too. Our street and neighborhood are ALWAYS neglected in any snow storm. We call and call each time, but it never seems to do any good. Even TEN DAYS after the storm, there were huge holes and snow pits which made driving very treacherous.

Sincerely yours, Mrs. Lynn Lewis, Vienna, VA 22180

It often takes 3-4 days before our street -- Occidental Drive, just outside Vienna -- is plowed. Sometimes it is never plowed at all. Things were better in February. When, 24 hours after the first February storm ended, I asked Supervisor Smyth's office what the timetable for the February storms would be, they contacted VDOT and the street was plowed within 12 hours, which was very much appreciated.

My wife is a singing teacher, so the ability of students to get to the house, and to safely park their car, is very important. Because the plow that did our street was narrow, and only made one pass, there was no way a student could safely park for a week. We lost a week's worth of income. It is critical that we know when the street will be plowed so we can plan. It would also be much better if the plow could make two passes to the full width of the street is plowed.

I live in Stonewall Manor, a neighborhood that is rarely plowed AT ALL no matter what the snowfall. Even in small snowfalls, this causes problems. Stonewall Drive, which leads out to Cedar Lane and is a major internal

road, is an incline going out of the neighborhood, and generally people cannot get up it. Drexel Street, which leads out to Cottage, the second way to get in and out of our neighborhood, and is also never plowed.

When, rarely, a plow comes in and does a once through on Drexel and Stonewall, it is just that. One lane plowed that is so difficult to discern that my husband and I can't figure out, was it plowed or is it just barely passable because so many cars have tramped down the snow? We really cannot tell. Additionally, beyond the rare pass at these two streets -- and just to where the intersect -- the plows do not go into the sidestreets AT ALL, leaving people unable to get to work, to the grocery store, and to appointments.

I have lived in Chicago, Buffalo, and Boston and truly have never seen anything like the way snow is handled here. In these places, the plowing begins the second snow begins falling and continues throughout, until everything is cleared everywhere. Sand trucks go nonstop also. Not one neighborhood is left isolated and alone.

I've lived here for 20 years and understand that the milder climate means that snow clearing is treated as an unusual event. But, realistically, it is not. Many years, we have at least one storm that shuts the place down, closing schools, which affects working parents and making it hard to get to work. Even when the storms are not so extreme, and only a couple of inches of snow falls, when the side streets are not plowed, it might as well be a major storm, for the effect is the same. My suggestion is to budget and plan for snowstorms. If they don't occur one or two seasons, great. Leave the money in the snow budget for the following year and build up a reserve so that we are prepared for the big one! Make it a priority to plow every street within 48 hours of the first snowfall. Then, sand or re-plow every street again. I'm sure that municipalities in colder climates can provide a primer on how they do it. We don't have to reinvent the wheel . . . just get the streets cleared.

By the way, weirdly enough, we had the best service this last snowstorm. Around Feb. 16 or 17, a backhoe came in and moved snow around on Drexel, going from Stonewall to the north. But I couldn't figure out why it never cleared Drexel from Stonewall to Cottage Street, which remained with one miserably rutted lane cleared for the duration -- after all that is the main street for the development. Who is making these decisions?

Regards, Jane Gurin

The snow removal lack of service was outrageous. Stonewall Manor was totally neglected. I called VDOT every day asking that Stonewall Drive be cleared. I was told that the number of calls which are received determine which roads get attention. The VDOT employee checked and found that calls regarding Stonewall Drive were so numerous, that they had to start a new page! Yet no action was taken and no one could indicate why not. I also called Supervisor Smyth's office and was told the message would be forwarded to VDOT. Nothing happened.

I think our Neighborhood Association should have a plan that enlists the residents to call designated and appropriate government representatives to demand action when we need snow removal. If no action ensues, we should hold those persons accountable and respond accordingly.

Just a historical note, one of the reasons that our Stonewall Manor Association came into being was the frustration residents experienced in dealing with snow removal problems.

Fred Heinzelmann, Vienna, VA. 22180

The contractor pick up trucks which originally plowed our streets did not have tire chains and could not make it up the hill on Stonewall Drive while plowing. They either turned around at the bottom of the hill or raised their blades and continued up the hill. It was not until Sunday afternoon following the big snow that Stonewall Drive had a lane plowed. This was done by a Vienna Fire Department pickup truck which was going to rescue two other fire trucks struck further in Stonewall Manor.

On the following Thursday, several contractor John Deere and Bobcat loaders took snow from the road and started piling it onto the already clean sidewalks. It was not until several residents complained that they stopped piling the snow on the sidewalks. Some of these piles were 12 to 15 feet high. They were not removed and their remnants are still on some sidewalks. On Rockbridge Street the loaders tore up road pavement and deposited it on the sidewalk. The debris is still there on Saturday 03-13-10.

Robert Rothman

Silentree of Tysons, my subdivision, did not see a snow plow for 8 days! Our biggest concern was that if we needed medical assistance, it would not be able to reach us in an emergency because they couldn't get in.

Two homes in our cul-de-sac of 7 are occupied by residents who are almost 80 years old. Another resident is younger but recovering from cancer treatment. Another is an older widow living alone. Residents of two of the remaining three homes worked very hard indeed to help us. None of us were able to get out for food or other essentials, and we had no idea when we would be able to. Fortunately, it wasn't a concern, as not only were people helpful, they were generous as well.

Frustration and anger levels grew as we weren't getting any results from numerous calls to Supervisor Smyth's office, VDOT and our representative in Richmond. Recorded messages were the best we could do. One of our children lives off of Hunter Mill Rd. near the animal park zoo, and they had a snow plow come through twice after the first February storm, and twice after the second storm - 4 times within a week! We don't understand the inconsistencies in scheduling snow removal equipment within Fairfax County. It seemed nobody was on the right page. Even after we were able to leave our homes, thanks to a huge front end loader whose operator did a magnificent job, Wolf Trap Rd. between Silentree and Woodford Rds. was a war zone consisting of a deep, rutted path, one car width wide which was almost impossible to navigate for at least two more days after we got cleared. It takes a lot of traffic and no attention was given to it, a rather hilly stretch to boot.

It took numerous emails and calls from our Stonewall neighborhood in Vienna to finally get the roads plowed. Our neighborhood is in Fairfax County and Stonewall Drive off Cedar Lane is the major entrance to our neighborhood of almost 300 families. It took a week and a half before we saw the snow plows, which arrived after midnight and worked very loudly until 3 a.m. or so. Our neighborhood is frequently missed by

VDOT/Fairfax County because of our proximity to the Town of Vienna – we are NOT in the Town of Vienna and rely on VDOT for our plowing. If it had been most neighborhoods I would have understood that VDOT was still plowing the main streets; however, when I finally got the courage to drive on our streets I noticed that once I was out of the neighborhood, all other streets were plowed and most showed dry blacktop. 10-11 days is a long time for a neighborhood to deal with these treacherous conditions. I know that many of my neighbors emailed and called VDOT and that some wrote to the congressman's office.

I am a dyed-in-the-wool public transportation user, having ditched my car shortly after I moved to Herndon over 7 years ago. (I've saved at least \$5,000/year in car payments, insurance, and gas by trading my car for a SmarTrip card. And that's with a zero-mile commute.) Until the last 2 years, I've been quite happy with Fairfax Connector, Metrorail, and the many other bus systems in the area. In all that time, I've only rented a Zipcar 8 times for special situations.

After the pre-Christmas snowstorm last December, I was delighted to find that the Town of Herndon had quickly plowed all the sidewalks I use to get to stores and buses. Neither Reston nor Fairfax County, however, had made any attempts to do so. Even the bus stops themselves remained piled with snow, save only for people tromping out shallow bays in 3-foot-high mounds of road-cleared snow in a few places. Until I called Fairfax County to complain about standing ON Sunset Hills to catch 505, with cars flying by me at 40+ mph with only 1-2 feet of clearance, did someone carve out places at some stops. When the bigger February storms came, I'd hoped for a better response, if a bit slower because of the greater snow. Instead, none of my frequented sidewalks received ANY attention, even from Herndon, until well after the melt had started **weeks** later. Some of that snow was still piled up as late as last week! Even though I waited a full week before asking Herndon to clear some critical sidewalks (one along a snow-emergency route!), it took three calls and two in-person visits over 2 weeks to get any action, by which time all they had to do was carve a 'doorway' through solitary snow mounds at a few intersections. And once again, Herndon did a far better job than Reston or Fairfax County.

There's a famous Chinese saying that every problem is an opportunity. I'd hoped that Fairfax County (and the DC area in general) might turn the problems of clearing roads into an opportunity to encourage public transportation use, which had the added advantage of helping individual drivers avoid getting stuck or stranded. But the County couldn't have done anything more calculated to prevent PT use than to leave even major sidewalks piled as high as six feet in snow, even failing to promptly clear (if clearing at all) bus stops, leaving people to stand next to cars whizzing by on slippery roads. (Never mind providing (any) dedicated and enough emergency funding to get Metro to get and keep cleared **all** the rails and stations.)

In the past 2 years, I've had the bus that stopped right next to my apartment completely cancelled; several bus stops moved from 2 blocks to half a mile away; another formerly nearby bus routed a full mile distant; and now I'm hearing that several of these buses are scheduled for cancellation or serious hours cutbacks. Never mind the problems it causes car-less people like me; every time we do this, we put even more drivers back on the road because PT just doesn't work for them. It costs billions to build major road expansion, but only millions to fund better and more reliable public transportation. Instead of cutting it back AND hampering by ignoring pedestrian needs like sidewalk snow-clearing, we must **increase** PT funding, **especially** when

budgets must be cut. If you tease people long enough with half-hearted PT services, you'll only convince them that PT isn't and never will be reliable.

A final thought: The other day, I found myself watching young children on the buses and trains, gawking out the window at the trains moving through tunnels, chatting excitedly over seatbacks with their siblings and even other kids they'd only see during a single trip. These children are learning to associate PT with fun -- but only if their parents ride. Even so, we really can't afford to wait an entire generation to convince tens or hundreds of thousands of current commuters that there's no good reason *not* to take public transit. This inevitably means that local governments must have PT needs first and foremost in their transportation programs!

It took over three days to get the first pass for clearance of snow. After the first clearance about 3 inches of snow remained on the road. This snow quickly froze --making the road impossible to walk. Now our children had to slip and slide to their school bus stop which was almost a mile away. We repeatedly asked VDOT to clean up this layer of ice. It took over a week for them to do this. This meant, that someone from the family had to wait and drive the children to the bus stop and pick them up. This needs to stop. VDOT and the Fairfax County, needs to make sure that there is some path for children to walk to the bus stop.

VDOT also needs to make sure that when they cleanup neighborhoods, they do not block the driveways of houses. This especially happens when the snow removal happens in the night. Once driveways are blocked, and the snow has frozen it is virtually impossible for the owner to clean up the snow. Please make sure this does not happen.

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity to share my personal experiences with VDOT's current practices of snow removal in Northern Virginia and specially my street, Carol Place, Falls Church, VA 22046, the feeder streets in my overall neighborhood to main roads, such as Shreve Road (aka 703).

I have owned a home in Providence District, Fairfax County, for about 40 years. Over the years, VDOT's service deteriorated. The problem is the use of under powered, light weight, small wheels, pick up trucks used by VDOT under independent contractors. No oversight and accountability systems are in place to review whether the under powered vehicles are of use for safe travel on streets in residential settings.

Overlooked is that (1) our area in Providence District has many hills and curves on the residential streets, (2) the independent contractors in far too many cases are poorly trained in snow removal and use under powered equipment, (3) the system used to determine the priority of streets for snow removal does not reflect the needs of the citizens who need access to cleared streets for fire and emergency vehicles.

After the February snows of 2010, snow removal on Carol Place was pathetic and dangerous. The independent contractor could not navigate the hill and curve, thus dropping his snow load in front of my driveway, before he made a run for the upper hill. This same contractor shoved snow upon the electrical transformer box (my yard) bumping nearby shrubs. Last year this same transformer box "blew up" no doubt to some melting snow damage and other wear and tear issues. The snow pushed up on the transformer box also covered the

telephone box, and cable underground unit. Snow removal on hills must be removed to the blacktop, and the snow pushed to the gutters to allow snow to melt without creation of a hill covered in ice!! Buckelew Drive, one continuous hill, was an ice hill for days, as was upper Allan Avenue.

Demographics of our area show that the citizens need cleared streets for work, school, and for emergency vehicles to safely pass.No one can navigate a street that has become an ice hill due to poor snow removal practices.

Until I notified the present VA Governor and the Richmond headquarters of VDOT did proper snow removal practices occur for my immediate neighborhood. VDOT responded with bobcats and front loaders working for days to remove the snow AND now ice, from the streets of Carol Place, Buckelew Drilve, and Allan Avenue. The situation had become critical.

When the bobcat and front loaders cleared the streets, the matter was properly done. I grew up during blizzards in Kansas; I know what good snowal removal looks like.

Erin Stevens, Falls Church, VA 22046, Providence District

My wife and I are deeply disappointed by the service our neighborhood received in the wake of the February snow storm. We live on Rockbridge Street in Vienna, which is part of the Stonewall Manor subdivision. Please note that we are close to the Town of Vienna border but we are not part of Vienna proper, and responsibility for our roads falls to VDOT. Our neighborhood did not benefit from ANY snow removal until February 16th, fully 10 days after the first snowfall ending February 6th. By then the street had been firmly packed into 4-6" of ice from vehicle travel and gradual melting.

At 11:30pm on the night of the 16th, two heavy construction vehicles arrived at the corner of Rockbridge Street and Stonewall Drive and began attempting to clear the street. The snow/ice was far too densely packed to plow in a conventional manner, so the operator of one of the vehicles began using the claws on the backhoe to slam through the ice. He would slam the claw down, and then drag it to break up the ice. The second vehicle cleared loose snow with the large front loading bucket and also cleared the ice broken up by the first vehicle. The noise of the equipment was extremely disruptive and it was impossible to sleep for several hours until they had moved farther down the street. The flashing lights, beeps from the backing up trucks, and the snow removal prevented us from sleeping. At times the house shook from the backhoe impacting the ground.

When the backhoes did arrive, they cleared "curb to curb" - which was helpful for driving, but, it resulted in the snow being dumped on our already shoveled sidewalks. The amount of ice dumped on our sidewalk made it literally impossible to shovel again, so the children who take a bus (our street has multiple bus routes) had to walk down the street intead of the sidewalk. Our street is very wide - why was it necessary to clear the whole thing? We can fit nearly four cars across, and plowing out two travel lanes would have been more than sufficient (and saved time, and allowed our sidewalks to remain clear).

The problem with clearing the street in this manner is that the pavement was severely damaged by the claws of the backhoe. There are claw marks all up and down the street and several potholes were created, including

a very large one that was unfortunately located at the foot of our driveway. The large pothole has since been patched for which we are thankful, however, the claw marks and smaller potholes remain.

We also did not realize how much asphalt and debris was contained in the snow that was dumped on our sidewalk that night. Now that warmer weather has arrived and all the snow has melted, the damage to the lawn between the sidewalk and street is revealed along with large amounts of asphalt covering the length of our sidewalk. The grass area between our street and the sidewalk was significantly damaged, with large chunks of grass and dirt torn up and thrown onto our lawn. This will require significant repair. Our curbstone at the corner of our driveway was also broken in several places. We are not alone in the damage to curbs and grass, many of our neighbors have been similarly affected.

What bothers us most about this chain of events is that the damage to the street could have been prevented if the street had been plowed in a timely manner, before it was packed into ice. But it was not, and now the street requires numerous repairs which will cost the state money at a time when funds are the tightest in recent history. As icing on the cake, the area in front of our house has been trashed and requires significant cleanup and replacement of sod.

As residents we understand the enormity of the efforts required to clean up such a massive snowstorm. We were not expecting to have our streets plowed "curb to curb" within a day of the storm, but we did expect to have at least ONE pass of a snow plow within 3-4 days to clear a single travel lane. Had that happened, the thick layer of ice would not have formed and we would not have needed a backhoe to tear up the ice (and thus our street).

We tried calling the snow emergency line but were repeatedly told that we "were being added to the list". No one could give us an estimated arrival time, or even day. In the days of GPS, cell phones and technology, I was horrified to know that no one, not even VDOT, could give me an estimate of when I might hope to see a plow.

We hope that VDOT will provide our neighborhood with better services going forward, starting with the repair of our street.

In Falls Church 22042, Jefferson Avenue between Annandale Road and Woodlawn Avenue was never plowed after the first (Feb. 5) snowstorm. The second snow came through the following Wednesday and the street remained unplowed. When plows finally made their way to our street, there were 6-10 inches of ice below the snow on the street. One plow driver I spoke to said he couldn't lower his plow because it would tear up his equipment. Our street is too small for the big trucks and the small plows were not equipped for the job. Finally, on Feb. 16 and 17, front loaders came through and dug up the huge amounts of ice and freed our street.

The street was treacherous --- so much so that an ambulance, two fire trucks, and a trash truck were all stuck for well over an hour each. Neighbors spent hours digging out these emergency vehicles - as well as many, many private cars and trucks that got stuck.

Is there a plowing priority list for Fairfax County like there is for Arlington? (Arlington makes its list public.) If so, this street should be moved up on the priority list, because it is a heavily-traveled residential street and

also a major cut-through from Lee Highway and Rte 7 to Rte 50. (I also recommend publicizing this list, if it exists.)

Many of the residents of this street have children and the street was not safe for over two weeks. There are also three school bus stops along this stretch, and school resumed regularly before the front loaders came through.

We respect and appreciate the severity of these storms and the massive clean-up these historic snows entailed; we just don't want our neighborhood to be forgotten in the future. Every single snow event we've lived through in this house (for almost five years) has meant that we don't see a plow. This street needs to be more of a priority.

Please contact me if you have questions; I can provide pictures and/or additional information if you need either. Thank you. Carolyn Wendell

Absolutely do not contract for any two wheel drive snowplows unless they use chains. I watched a two wheel dumptruck plow spend 8 hours plowing no more than 1/2 mile of roadway in Mantua. A total waste of tax payer money.

My husband and I were trapped on our street for days and it took way too long for a plow to come to the neighborhood, much less my street. McNeil Street is not a dead end street or cul du sac. Obviously, it also isn't a major thoroughfare. However, after four days without a plow, and then another four, and then more, I began to think that our street is not on the VDOT maps. Or, worse, that it is and that contractors were taking VDOT's money and telling them the street was done when it was not. Either way, it was ridiculous. And it wasn't for lack of us pointing out where our street was or the need for the plow, as many neighbors did exactly that. Supervisor Smythe's office has a series of emails from me reporting my lack of success with VDOT, and it is clear as I emailed that VDOT was not responding to our issues.

Once a plow did arrive, approximately 10 days after the first snowfall, the street was beautifully plowed. Too little, too late, when I had to miss many days of work because I could NOT get down the street safely and too little, too late, when I spent day after day terrified that I was going to either get stuck in the neighborhood or have an accident. Ten days is way too long to wait to be able to safely traverse a street.

Our neighborhood in Stonewall Manor was ignored following the 1st big storm, with the exception of one pick up truck pass through early in the storm, until Day 5. At that time, two pick up trucks came which were inadequate to the job, leaving behind the 8 - 10 inch ice packs and ridges which both prevented access to some cars, and, for some of us, caused hundreds of dollars in damage. My 2007 Honda Odyssey, in service for only 2.25 years, required full wheel realignments and steering fluid pump motor replacement as a result of the terrible and almost impossible driving conditions.

Day 10 VDOT finally sent a crew which was actually able to deal with the accumulated ice and snow.

Christine Erbacher, Vienna, VA 22180

The snow removal service in our neighborhood (no exit street off 123 near Hunter Mill) was outstanding - thank you!!

Joe Pegnato, Vienna, VA 22181

I live on the main street in my neighborhood, Stonewall Drive. Our portion of the street is not very heavily traveled. Several days AFTER the snow had stopped falling, small Bob Cats came through my neighborhood and cleared the street. They were able to take up the six to eight inches of snow and ice that was compacted and stuck in the travel lanes. That was very helpful.

However they also moved the snow piles from the entire street. They did this by moving perpendicular to the roadway and scooping everything up, driving until they reached the curb and then dumping the snow. They BURIED EVERY SIDEWALK on my street with heavy ice chunks. There was no reason for this. This resulted in kids having to walk in the street when returning to school.

I do appreciate the snow plowing of our street, nine days after the storm. But, I do not appreciate the snow plows running over my yard and breaking the curb in a number of places. I have very deep ruts in my yard that will need to be taken care of with grass seed and soil. I have costly repairs ahead of me and also the curb breakage is an eyesore and wonder when Fairfax County will repair those?

Also, VDOT needs to learn that my area is not in Vienna but in Fairfax County!

Thank you, Diane Meek, Vienna VA 22180

I send the e-mail below to VDOT, among others, and received no acknowledgment, reply or explanation. (Senator Janet Howell's office did reply.) Additional concerns that I did not mention in the e-mail below include grass sod being torn up and the cement curb in two places on our block was crushed or broken by the VDOT equipment. The personal safety and property protection of residents were completely disregarded by VDOT actions here. Sincerely, Rob Tobiassen

----- Original Message -----

From: Robert Tobiassen

To: Morteza.Salehi@VDOT.Virginia.gov

Cc: dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov ; SenHowell@aol.gov ; district32@senate.virginia.gov ; DelJScott@house.state.va.us ; jane.strauss@fcps.edu

Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2010 9:21 PM

Subject: Dangerous Snow Removal Condition Report

Mr. Salehi,

I want to report a dangerous condition created by the VDOT snow removal in your district. Around 1:30 or 2:00 AM on Saturday morning, heavy duty snow removal equipment pushed and compacted street snow onto the previously cleared sidewalks on Moly Drive, Casemont and other local streets. This created tightly packed mounds of snow and ice between five and seven feet tall and running huge spans (20 feet and more at times) of the sidewalk making it impossible for residents to remove the packed snow and ice. We live near Haycock Elementary School and Longfellow Middle School to which many neighborhood children walk. Your team's actions force children to walk in the streets starting on Tuesday when schools re-open and residents walking to Metro or walking dogs, etc. to walk in the streets. Given the forecasted low temperatures and the huge mounds of snow and ice, this condition will last for a while and continue to pose dangerous conditions to children and other residents. You are more than welcome to come and see the mess yourself and let the community know what you plan to do. All of the neighbors in these blocks are furious and, as you can see, we are letting our elected officials know if this situation.

Sincerely, Robert Tobiassen

We had phenomenal plow service during the January snowstorms, and we wanted to recognize the work of the drivers. We are located in North Point Reston in the Stuarts Creek neighborhood, just off Fairfax County Parkway. The night the first storm began, we had a heavy duty, blue farm plow come through the neighborhood several times. He was followed by two pickup trucks with plows. Drivers were courteous and mindful about keeping resident driveways clear, and once the snow stopped and the streets were passable they assisted with enabling cars parked on the street in being able to move once again. We even had a mini loader who helped out. Fantastic job.

I live at 2556 Bridge Hill Lane, Oakton, VA 22124. My comments relate specifically to the Bridges of Oakton neighborhood and its streets (Bridge Hill Lane, Foxclove Road, Donns Way, and Yonder Hills Way).

1. Our neighborhood is accessed via Stuart Mill Road, the only means of ingress and egress.
2. There was one snow plow pass on Stuart Mill Road after the first major snowstorm in February, which cleared approximately ONE lane. After that, there was not a snow plow to be scene for more than 4 days. Needless to say, Stuart Mill Road was virtually impassable for that time.
3. It is a good thing folks stayed home and there were no emergencies – because it would have been virtually impossible for emergency equipment to traverse Stuart Mill Road.
4. VDOT has never plowed our streets, even though they are supposed to plow them. Of course, these storms were no exception.

5. So, how have we coped? For all of these years, we have hired a private contractor to plow our neighborhood streets – something that has cost the community thousands of dollars.
6. How is it that our private contractor was able to clear our neighborhood roads, when VDOT could not or would not plow a major road such as Stuart Mill Road?
7. Amazingly, VDOT did make a presence on Bridge Hill Lane on Thursday, February 25, 2010 with two front end loaders. Of course, they only spent a few minutes on Bridge Hill Lane since our roads were clear. Note the date – more than 2 weeks after the snowstorms!
8. Up until the end of February, Stuart Mill Road still had snow encroaching the driving lanes. Why did VDOT not come through and fully clear the road – there was plenty of time to do it. Instead, the approach taken was to let Mother Nature do it. Reminds me of Mayor Fenty’s response to the question of when the snow would be cleared – “When it melts.”
9. The residents of Bridges of Oakton want to impress on our leaders that VDOT has an obligation to plow our neighborhood streets. We pay taxes and are receiving precious few services in return. Plowing the streets is a basic need so that people can go to work and children can go to school. No excuses, it has to be done.
10. We recognize that these storms were once in a lifetime events. Put that behind us. What we are asking for is responsive, basic services that cope with the norm.
11. Calling VDOT is useless. It is clear that there is little commitment to actually passing the messages to where they need to go, and even less desire to actually execute what needs to be done.

James Fitzwilliam, President, Bridges of Oakton HOA

During both of the major snow storms that Northern Virginia and other areas experienced this winter, our street was particularly hard hit. Vale Spring Drive, Lakin Place and Lloyds Place are in Oakton and have about 30 single family houses. Vale Spring Drive is a dead end spur off of Vale Road. During both storms after a day or two, the surrounding residential roads that connect to Vale Road were plowed. Those roads included: Hunt Road, Fox Den Lane and Lapham Drive. Vale Spring Drive did not get plowed until several days later after the first major storm and not until six days later after the second storm. By then the road had become several inches of packed frozen snow and ice from vehicles attempting to drive on it, several of which got stuck and blocked or partially blocked the road. During those many days, the vast majority of residents were not able to drive out to Vale Road, which was passable the day after each storm ended. Vale Spring Drive was also not accessible for any emergency vehicles that might have needed to utilize it, making many homeowners concerned about their safety, particularly if electric power would have been lost, which is often the case in our area. In the future, we would like to see Vale Spring Drive snow plowed with the same frequency as the neighboring residential roads.

I have two public safety concerns that apply to all three major snowfalls:

1. Nutley Street (243) between Lee Highway (29) and Arlington Boulevard (Rt 50) was inadequately plowed and, as a major exit route off I-66 to Route 50 with a lot of commuter and bus traffic, was very dangerous. Nutley Street North of Lee Highway toward Vienna, Lee Highway and Arlington Boulevard were adequately plowed (except the turn lanes at Nutley and Barkley) but that one section seemed to fall through a crack, maybe from a lack of clear jurisdiction or defined responsibility. What ever the cause this needs to be fixed before the next snowfall.

2. In Mantua, the short stretch consisting of Horner and Lido Place between Prince William Drive and Southwick Street was very poorly plowed (not even a single clear lane) and would have posed a real challenge for emergency access into Mantua if anyone had gotten stuck in that single narrow lane (never plowed to the pavement or two lanes). Prince William Drive and Southwick Street were plowed and replowed (although Southwick Street was not adequate westbound past Barkley Street). Again, whomever was responsible for this short section of street should be called on to explain why was this section was neglected and how it will be corrected.

I live on Southwick Street in Mantua. Plowing was adequate in front of my house. However, I was amazed at what it was costing VDOT for the contract driver that drove back and forth on Southwick Street for hours with his plow up and no effort to widen the lanes (or go take care of Lido Place). Clearly VDOT was not supervising their contractors and was paying for a lot of wasted, unproductive hours.

Thank you, Ron Knecht

It took seven days for a plow to come down my street, and that was after our neighborhood began calling Senator Petersen's office for action. Presumably as a result of his staff's intervention, a small truck with a front plow came through and took off the top layer and packed down the drifts in the middle of the road. I was able to go to work for one day in a mini van that was high enough to plow through the remaining snow. No one without four wheel drive or a high car could drive the Oakdale park subdivision. The town of Vienna had by then completely plowed their neighborhood roads, but our neighborhood is on the town border in the county and is the state's responsibility to plow. A heavy truck could have easily swept through earlier in the storms. I understand from my family members that their neighborhoods were completely plowed within two days of both snows- in Springfield district, Mason district, but not Braddock or here in Providence, so clearly there were uneven distributions/assignments of equipment and contractors.

After the second snow storm, we did not see a plow for six days until several of us complained bitterly to VDOT and contacted Supervisor Smyth's office for help. During this period, a full size trash truck, a full size delivery van, a landscaping company truck and several private vehicles became stuck on two roads, 500 yards outside the town of Vienna limits. This was because the streets had frozen and were not passable. The state's performance - contractors and otherwise - was inexcusable. GRADE F.

Hi - It took 11 days after the big snow to get New Providence Village Drive plowed. I'm happy that I had enough food and did not have a medical emergency during this time. If there was an emergency of some sort

we would have been trapped, and this is totally unacceptable. Could Fairfax County do a better job of maintaining its roads than VDOT?

As taxpayers, we expected our Westwood Mews Ct road (considered subdivision or secondary roads) to be cleared at the same time as the other secondary roads were being cleared. Our friends at Cottage St (between Gallows Road and Cedar Lane) and the side roads intersecting with Cottage St have been plowed numerous times. As a matter of fact, one resident in that subdivision pleaded for the plow truck to stop plowing because it kept piling up snow over and over again on their driveway (and after they've cleared their driveway)! Also, Wolftrap Road was plowed but not between George Washington Road and Woodford St. On the first snow storm in December, we had to hire a private plow truck to clear our street. It is expensive to hire a private contractor and we decided not to do that again. At the last snow storm (which turned to ice), my husband (who has a heart condition by the way), my brother (who lives in Fairfax and has a huge SUV), and two other neighbors, tried to clean a path for vehicles to drive out of our street. Inch by inch, my husband and a neighbor had to break the ice on the very narrow path on our street. Incidentally, even after your message to me that our road will be plowed, nothing was done. This is clearly unacceptable and I hope will not happen again. Better planning of allocating resources to all the roads (not just some) and better management of implementing the plan are needed. With so many ways now to disseminate information to citizens, it would be helpful to know when streets will be plowed. In sum, we would like to see a better plan of action, better management, and communication.

I live in the Bridges Of Oakton. Stuart Mill was not cleared for days after the February snow storm. I missed my flight on 2/12 even though Dulles was open I could not get to the airport. In the end I never got to my destination there was just no way out of the Bridges.

Severe damage was done to my lawn at 1405 Colleen Lane, McLean 22101-3105. The snow plows did NOT stay on the street, but went over the concrete curb (and on to my lawn) approximately 20-30 feet before the street began to turn right for the ultimate entry into the offset cul-de-sac at the North terminus of Colleen Lane. They only plowed a path wide enough for one (1) vehicle, hence autos, UPS, FED EX, TRASH pickup vehicles, etc., were all driving and rutting my lawn, especially as daytime temperatures increased above freezing.

Finally, many days later, VDOT arrived on the scene and did the so called curve to curve job. In my case they did yet more damage. We now have an approximately 70 ft long by 4-5 ft wide by 10 inch deep mud hole in our lawn. I have a large number of photographs which I could provide if an e-mail address had been provided.

Please note we had all our vehicles parked on our property at all times in our drive.

MY question is: Who should I contact to get this unsightly, expensive damage repaired? FAIRFAX COUNT or VDOT??

ROY E. REICHENBACH McLean, VA 22101-3105

We live in Morgan Chase Subdivision, off Morgan Lane and Oak Street. During the Feb snows we had great difficulty first getting up Mogan Lane at Oak Street (hill), and then west on Oak Street to Gallows Road. A day or so of this was understandable given the snow volume, but Oak Street was left unattended for nearly a week, resulting in severe rutting and single lane conditions. The rutting wasn't cleared out for 8-10 days.

Over 200 homes along either side of Oak (between Gallows and the Beltway) must use Oak Street for ingress/egress. Emergency vehicles were unable at times to reach Morgan Chase. VDOT should not treat Oak Street as a country byway--Oak really should be given the same prioirity as Idylwood.

Please don't let this happen again!

We live in a small sub-division just off Prosperity Avenue. Fortunately, I and my neighbor have a large snow blower. We cleaned our Cul-de-sac and other neighbors drives so that we could get to Wynford drive and then out of our neighborhood. We used 4 wheel drive vehicles to make a path on Wynford. We did get plowed about 8 days later, however, who ever did the job, did a pitiful job of it.

Hi, we waited 4 days for the snow plows to reach our neighborhood (Falls Hill in Falls Church -- off Shreve Road). But once they reached us, they kept returning and finally did a great job removing the snow down to the pavement.

One suggestion I would make is to encourage neighborhoods to set up an intranet system or a Yahoo group, something that would help neighbors keep in touch with each other and learn about one another throughout the year. Maybe a workshop could be held where civic associations could learn about what other

I was thinking about elderly people and those who may need oxygen or other things esp. during an emergency. When they have lost touch with their neighbors, they may not have anyone to turn to.

I think it was okay given the circumstances.

We didn't get plowed during the first of the two snow falls, so our street was quite a mess after the second one. I have a garden tractor with a snowblower and did what I could, but it was too much. Most of us were snowed in for about 3 days after the last storm. Fortunately, there were no crises and I could telecommute to work. Neighbors with 4x4s made grocery runs and helped our elderly neighbors when needed.

I think VDOT did an okay job given the challenge these storms presented. We probably could have managed better if they had made just a single pass after the first storm--sort of put a dent in it. But our neighborhood teamed up and cleaned what we could so the 4x4s could move.

I am disappointed in many of the complainers I've heard here. I wonder how much they got out and tried to do their part or just sat inside and, well, complained.



Phone Feedback

The Office of Public Affairs also offered the opportunity for the public to provide feedback through a recorded phone line. We received five messages below.

I live on a dead end street and some of the people who parked on the street shoveled the snow into the middle of the round about. The snow was as tall as six feet in some areas and when the snow plows came around they went over my yard destroying it.

Cars should be required to only park on one side of the street during snow emergencies which would allow the snow plows to maneuver

If dump trucks could come around to urban areas and pick up the large piles of snow, it would greatly reduce the congestion in urban areas.

I live in the Sully District off of Ox Road. We had to hire a snow plow to get out of our neighborhood. The snow plows came a day after schools opened and two weeks after the first storm. I would rate the snow removal efforts very low for residential areas, but I know it was a hundred year storm.

I live in the Sully District off of Paradise Lane. I was VERY impressed of the plowing of our streets. I have lived here since 1974 and this is one of the best jobs taking care of our roads.