

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE BULLETIN #3/2008

Snow Removal Procedures at Railway Crossings

Summary

This Bulletin is issued to inform maintenance contractors and department staff of the appropriate snow plowing procedures at railway crossings.

Proper snow plowing is essential at railway crossings in order to avoid creating unsafe conditions. In response to safety concerns raised by the public and some railway personnel at crossings during the winter season, highway maintenance staff is reminded of the guidelines necessary for safety when undertaking snow removal at level railway crossings.

Key Changes

Documentation of the department best practices for snow removal at railway crossings has been completed. These best practices include the following:

1. When plowing snow at railway crossing locations, the snowplow blade must be raised before going over the crossing surface to ensure that the blades do not damage the rails.
2. Windrows must not be left between the rails or on the approaches to the crossing. This can result in unsafe conditions with reduced sightlines at the crossing and trains hitting windrows. The contact of trains with windrows could result in injuries and/or vehicle damage caused by thrown snow and ice.
3. In case of an incident, Canadian National Railway identifies all public crossings with a rail line mile and subdivision marker on the crossing posts, along with a 24-hour emergency phone number, which is also provided on the crossing posts. Canadian Pacific Railway crossings are identified by a unique crossing ID number, which is found on the yellow signs mounted vertically on the cross-buck posts or signal masts, and a 24-hour emergency phone number. **Any incident involving damage to signage, crossing surface or rails at a crossing should be called in to the emergency number immediately.**
4. The procedures above also apply for provincial rail line crossings.

These procedures are an enhancement to the railway crossing maintenance requirements laid out in Section 1 – Highway Maintenance Guidelines, sub-section 4.1 of the Highway Maintenance Guidelines and Level of Service Manual.

The new standards as indicated in this Bulletin are to be implemented immediately as per the usual practice.

Effective Date

January 24, 2008

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References

None.

Approved:

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