



TOWN OF UNION *Maine*

As expected, mother nature decided to make up for lost time in January with several storms, including three in one week. Two of this month's storms had our crews out 24 hours or more. These type storms are very taxing on the crew, but they dig deep and push through to make sure the roads are travel worthy as soon as they possibly can be.

A major winter storm, like a couple we had this month, are a lot more about just plowing roads. There is a lot of work and planning that goes into preparing for and cleaning up after a large snowstorm. The drivers are out as soon as it starts snowing and make continuous loops around their assigned routes until the storm ends. (On long duration storms they are required to take breaks to eat and/or rest. We want to do our best to have the roads clear in a timely manner, but the safety of the crew is paramount.) In addition to plowing roads, all town owned parking lots must be plowed, especially the fire/ems station, which gets plowed multiple times per storm. When the snow finally stops falling there is a ton of cleaning up to do. Depending on the amount of snow and the temperature, we make at least one and usually two more loops around to get all the slush off the roads. Then we have to clear the piles of snow out of the public parking lots on the Common, which we did three times this month, removing 18 truck loads of snow. And finally, we clear out various hydrants around town, to make sure they are accessible for the fire department. We had 12 weather related road issues including the "big storms". Of those 12, half of them were for sanding only.

This month we added a new part-time plow driver to our crew. Local resident Tom Pitzi will fill in when needed during larger storms as an extra driver and be available if one of our full-time drivers is unable to work for whatever reason. This is the first time in three years we have had the luxury of having an additional driver which is definitely a godsend.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Elwell - Public Works Director



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Removing the pile of snow on the Common after storm on January 24th.