



TOWN OF UNION *Maine*

We got our first significant snowstorm this year on January 7 which produced six to eight inches of snow. Other than that, we only had a bunch of smaller storms of three or four inches and one freezing rain/ice event. In total we went out 12 times to either plow or sand as there were a handful of mornings that we had some black ice.

If the crew isn't out plowing or sanding, they are at the shop cleaning equipment. The loader and all the trucks get washed after every storm as they are caked with sand and salt, and we try to minimize the amount of time the salt sits on metal surfaces if we can help it. It takes on average over an hour to thoroughly get all the salt residue out of all the corners, cracks, and crevices and properly wash a dump truck with a plow and wing including the interior.

In between plowing, sanding, and washing trucks, we found time to get our annual safety training done. Each year we are required to complete mandatory refresher training on topics such as bloodborne pathogens, fire extinguishers, lockout-tagout, and personal protective equipment to name a few. Most of these training classes are an hour long and are all done online. There is a test after each class that must be passed with an 80% or greater. Everyone on the crew completed all of these this month so we are good for another year. In addition to the mandated training, the whole crew participated in a CPR and AED training class that was conducted at no charge by Union Fire & Rescue. While we hopefully won't have to ever use this training, I felt it was important for us all to at least know the basics, just in case.

At lastly this month, the town has its first posted bridge. The "Upper Medomak" bridge, which is on Shepard Hill Rd located at the Washington town line, has been posted by Maine DOT to 25 tons (50,000 lbs) maximum. Every bridge in the state of Maine is inspected every two years and if a bridge's condition deteriorates the first step that MDOT takes is to post the bridge to a certain weight load in order to prolong the life of said bridge. The Upper Medomak bridge was built in 1966 and will remain posted until subsequent inspections show further deterioration at which time MDOT will determine if the maximum weight load should be lowered further and eventually the bridge will need to be replaced. Bridge money in the state of Maine is very tight and based on the daily vehicle average that travels over the Upper Medomak bridge, I can say with some level of certainty that this particular bridge will not be replaced anytime in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Elwell - Public Works Director