



Tips for Lake-Friendly Snow Storage and Removal



Did you know that improper snow storage and removal practices can damage lake quality? Snow often contains trash, nutrients, sediment, salt, sand, and pollutants from vehicles. When space for snow storage is limited, some businesses and residents may plow snow into wetland and stream areas—some may even plow snow right into rivers and lakes! These practices often cause violations of state water quality standards and degrade the health of our waterbodies.

Landowners are responsible for the snow removal practices that are conducted on their property. Here are some tips that will help you protect the quality of your local lake, while allowing you to “dig-out” after the snowstorms that are surely headed our way.

- Avoid blocking culverts and catch basin inlets, vegetated swales, and stone-lined drainage channels with plowed snow. Storing snow in these areas can cause flooding.
- Avoid plowing snow onto bare soil and dirt roads that are unstable or steep. The ability of these surfaces to absorb snow melt is very low. Plowing snow onto these areas could cause soil erosion and generate polluted runoff water.
- Plow snow only off of hard surfaces that do not absorb water, such as driveways and walkways. Do not plow snow off of vegetated areas.
- Identify appropriate areas to store snow and communicate this with the plow operator.
 - Install markers to identify the locations of planters, soil mounds, and bare soil.
 - Deposit and store snow only in areas that can infiltrate snowmelt such as vegetated areas that are not connected to streams and are not wet (marshy) part of the year. If no such snow storage area exists on your property, design an infiltration system adjacent to your driveway that has a low, landscaped berm around it to contain meltwater from plowed snow.
- As a last resort, have the snow hauled away, but make sure that the snow will be deposited in an appropriate location.

NH LAKES is the only statewide, member-supported nonprofit organization working to keep New Hampshire's lakes clean and healthy, now and in the future. The organization works with partners, promotes clean water policies and responsible use, and inspires the public to care for our lakes. For information, visit www.nhlakes.org, email info@nhlakes.org, or call 603.226.0299.

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