Coming soon to your neighborhood: Snowplows on City trash trucks

As you read this in December, you may have already benefitted from a major new service throughout Loveland. Beginning this winter, when the city is hit with a major snowfall, trash trucks with snowplows will clear the centers of residential streets.

Following a successful trial program last year, the Streets Division will now use City trash and recycling trucks equipped with newly-purchased snowplow equipment to open up residential streets. When a big storm hits, the plows will be affixed to ten trash trucks that will then plow the center third—not curb to curb—of the residential streets.

It's important to remember residential street clearing is third priority. First priority is the city's highways and main avenues—287, 34, 402, Taft, Wilson, etc. Second priority is heavily-used two-lane collector streets, school bus routes and streets that serve commercial/industrial zones—W. 22nd, Duffield, Colorado, Silver Leaf, Rossum and others.

The trash-truck plows will be called out only when the snowfall exceeds six inches deep, the weather forecast is poor and the higher priority streets are already passable.

Some history

Making use of the trash trucks—an existing City resource—to clear snow in Loveland was inspired by similar use of refuse trucks back East in cities like New York, Milwaukee, Baltimore and others. Loveland may be the only small city west of the Mississippi doing this.

Loveland residents may painfully remember the winter of 2006-07 when snowstorms fell one after another during a prolonged cold spell. City crews were so busy keeping the main roads open they couldn’t attack the residential streets. Residents may have been just a block or two from a plowed roadway but couldn’t get there without a big-league, 4-wheel-drive vehicle.

In just a couple of days, the vehicles that did travel the unplowed residential streets packed down the snow, plus the ongoing freeze-thaw-freeze weather pattern resulted in roadways that resembled frozen and badly rutted lakes. The city called out its heavy-duty equipment plus spent about three-quarters of a million dollars hiring private contractors with road graders and front-end loaders. The results were not only costly but disappointing. Even the heavy equipment couldn’t scrape up the ice.

(continued on page 2)
Will you know what to do if it’s lights out?

No one likes it when the power goes out, especially Loveland’s Water and Power department. Fortunately, due to Water & Power’s extremely high rate of uninterrupted power delivery—99.99 percent—an outage is a very rare occurrence here. But that doesn’t mean it can’t happen. Even a very robust, reliable system can experience an occasional glitch and that means lights out for what could be 30 seconds, three minutes, three hours or more.

In the very rare event that the power goes out, especially in cold weather, do you know what to do to keep your family comfortable and safe?

In any outage there are a few steps homeowners should immediately take. First, try to determine the source of the outage. The outage could be your house only, due to a blown circuit or fuse, so first check your electrical panel. If it’s clear the outage is more widespread—street lights and neighbors’ homes are also dark, report the outage to the power department. A handy way to get that number in a hurry is to look at your utility bill.

As with any unforeseen event, advance planning can make a world of difference in your safety and comfort, no matter how long the outage. Residents should have the following on hand and have planned for contingencies.

Items to have on hand for a power outage:

- Several working flashlights and extra batteries (flashlights are much safer than candles and can even be handled by young children).
- A battery-powered camping lantern with extra battery.

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Sales tax rebate totals highest ever

This year, 932 Loveland households received a total of more than $140,000 through the long-standing Food and Utility Sales Tax Rebate Program. As the name implies, the program awards rebates to low-income families to offset sales taxes paid on their food purchases and utility costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rebates issued</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Rebate issued</td>
<td>$106,144</td>
<td>$93,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Rebate issued</td>
<td>$37,260</td>
<td>$30,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total benefit</td>
<td>$143,424</td>
<td>$124,102</td>
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<tr>
<td>New applicants</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rebate averaged $154 per household; $114 for the food rebate and $40 for the utility portion. All

(continued on page 4)
Plowing priorities: All streets are not treated equality

Priority One: Four-lane arterials that carry the most traffic, plus important two-lane thoroughfares. This includes state highways 34, 287 and 402 plus Loveland’s other main streets such as 29th, 1st, Taft, Wilson, Madison and 14th St. SW. Roads to hospitals, fire stations, and police stations are kept open.

Priority Two: Collector streets school bus routes and streets which serve commercial/industrial zones get plowed next. Examples are 18th, 22nd, Van Buren, 8th, 10th, Dotsero, Colorado, Duffield, Carlisle and Silver Leaf.

Priority Three: Remaining streets including residential, are not routinely plowed and de-iced because their lower traffic volumes and traffic speeds do not typically warrant the expense. However, when snow accumulations are such that residents will have difficulty driving to the nearest designated plowed route—usually six inches or more—trash trucks with snowplows may be deployed to clear a path down the center of each street. Snow depths, daytime temperatures and the time of year will be factored into the decision to plow or not plow residential streets.

Remember:
• Residents are responsible for opening up their own driveways.
• Residents are responsible for clearing their sidewalks within 24 hours after the snowfall.

Both ends working
When the snow falls, Loveland’s dump trucks are equipped stem to stern to clear the roads. On the front is a heavy duty snowplow and on the rear is a spreader for the de-icer loaded in the truck’s dump box.

First priority (photo at left)
Loveland’s major streets get major attention during snowstorms. State highways like US287 shown here downtown are the first to be plowed and maintained. Next come collector streets and other important roadways. Residential streets are lowest priority, but now using trash trucks equipped with snowplows, may have center lanes plowed after major snowfalls only — i.e. more than six inches.

Snow Squad needs volunteers
The City of Loveland Snow Squad program needs volunteers to help shovel snow for low income, disabled residents. City regulations require that sidewalks be cleared within 24 hours after a snowfall.

There is currently a waiting list of residents in-need, several of whom are in hospice care and therefore not able to shovel the sidewalks at their homes. Volunteers are asked to commit to a full season of shoveling.

To help a neighbor in-need this winter, or for more information, contact Snow Squad at 962-2764.

PWP rewards customers for saving big bucks

Some lucky Loveland residents will soon be rewarded for saving electricity and money through Loveland Water & Power’s Partnering with Power (PWP) program.

The summer of 2010 saw record demand for power due to hot temperatures and increased air conditioner use throughout the city. Fortunately, thanks to the 3,300 residents participating in PWP, these peak demands were not only manageable, but reduced power use.

The new boxes greatly enhance ease-of-use and convenience for transit riders by enabling them to pay their bus fare with a quick swipe of a card versus waiting to have an old punch-pass punched or other pass checked by the driver. The change counter also speeds fare collection by eradicating the arduous process of change counting for passengers and drivers alike.

“We’re very happy to be able to provide even better customer service to our passengers with our new electronic fare boxes in place,” said Transit Manager Marcy Abreo. “The new boxes will help us achieve better on-time performance, improve administrative efficiency and provide a much more user-friendly system for both passengers and drivers.”

In addition to the electronic fare boxes, COLT is now offering several new passes to further enhance ease-of-use and provide more pass options and flexibility for passengers.

American with Disabilities (ADA) Pass* . $25.00
Adult Annual Pass* (new) . $180.00
Senior Annual Pass* . $25.00
Student Annual Pass* . $25.00
10 Day Pass . $12.50
20 Day Pass . $22.50
Monthly Pass . $30.00*

*Photo Required

To purchase a bus pass, go to the COLT office, 410 E. Fifth St. from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Bring a current ID. Cash and checks are accepted.

For more information, call COLT, 962-2700.

(continued on page 4)
Annual holiday ornament on sale now

The 2010 Loveland Holiday Ornament is on sale now for $25 at area retailers. This year’s ornament, “Holiday Hearts,” was designed by local artist Cammie Lundeen—a well-known wildlife sculptor who designed the Holiday Council’s very first ornament twenty years ago in 1990. This beautiful pewter ornament is great for collectors, horse-lovers or anyone who appreciates fine art.

Proceeds benefit the Loveland Winter Holiday Council – the organization that helps pay for holiday banners, lights and other decorations in downtown Loveland during the holidays. For more information call the Holiday Council, 622-2425.

Sales tax rebate totals highest ever

(continued from page 2) recipients received both rebates. While the total dollars were the highest ever awarded by the City of Loveland, the number of households receiving rebates and the average rebate amount were higher in prior years. In 2004, 1197 families received rebates and in 2009, the average household received $163. The program is evolving every year. Loveland citizens continue to express appreciation to the City for providing the Food and Utility Sales Tax Rebate benefit.

PWP rewards customers for saving big bucks

(continued from page 3) demand by 66,370 kilowatt-hours, resulting in $101,110 in savings for Water & Power. Thanks to programs like PWP and the residents who participate, Loveland is able to keep residential power rates very low. Loveland currently has the second lowest residential power rates in the state. To thank these customers for their participation, beginning this month, PWP will have a drawing to select two PWP participants who will receive a $25 credit on their utility bill. During peak power months—May through September—for four winners per month will be selected.

PWP is a free, voluntary program offered through Loveland Water & Power. Residents on the program have an automatic cycling unit installed on their air conditioners, which cuts power usage while still keeping cool air moving through the house. Power demand is lowered, but residents’ homes stay cool and comfortable. For more information on PWP or to enroll, and to find out the names of drawing winners, go to www.cityofloveland.org/pwp or call 962-3000.

Will you know what to do if it’s lights out? (continued from page 2)

• A battery-powered cell phone charger (cell phones lose their charge quickly so having a battery-powered charger is a good fail-safe).
• Foods that do not require cooking such as canned goods (meat, fruit, vegetables) cereals, crackers, cookies, even shelf-safe milk (make sure you have a non-electric, hand-crank can opener can open in the house because along with the rest of your appliances, your electric can opener will be on the blink).
• It’s always a good idea to have some bottled water for a variety of needs.
• A battery-operated radio.

In the event of a prolonged outage:

• If you have a regular wood stove or fireplace, you can use it for heat, however, a lot of wood-firedplaces may actually pull more heat out of the house, so know how efficient your fireplace is before you try to use it as a heat source.
• Dress the family in warm clothing.
• Keep the refrigerator and freezer shut as much as possible to preserve food (perishable food will usually be OK for hours if the cold air stays trapped).
• Make sure you have contingency plans for family members who rely on electrically-powered medical devices.
• Check in on elderly neighbors to make sure they have what they need and are staying warm.
• If the temperature in the house is significantly dropping, it’s a good idea to run a trickle of water from faucets to keep pipes from freezing.

What not to do during a power outage:

• Never use kerosene heaters, BBQs or any type of outdoor appliance in the house or garage – all emit carbon monoxide.
• Don’t burn charcoal – it too emits carbon monoxide.

Before the power comes back on:

• Unplug some of your major appliances and electronics such as computers, TVs and stereos to protect them from a power surge that could occur when power is restored.
• Better yet, to ensure sensitive electronics such as TVs and computers are well-protected, no matter what, have them on surge protectors at all times.

A few final tips:

• Call emergency services only if you have a bonafide emergency.
• Never go near downed power lines but if you see some, do call 911 and alert Water & Power.
• If you have to go out, drive carefully because traffic signals could also be out.
• If traffic signals are not working treat all intersections as four-way stops.

To report an outage on weekdays between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., call 962-3581. At all other times, call 663-1043. For more information on power outages go to the Water & Power webpages at www.cityofloveland.org.