

Winter Gritting Policy Statement

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 It is the policy of Belfast Harbour Commissioners (BHC) to maintain safe road and quay surfaces at all times, so far as is reasonably practical.

1.2 The objective of this Policy is to facilitate, as far as reasonably possible, the safe movement of traffic and personnel on the road network and operational quays that are under the control of BHC during adverse winter conditions.

1.3 At times of predicted low temperatures BHC aims to provide a winter road treatment service enabling as far as is reasonably practical the safe movement of traffic on all primary (blue) routes and other essential operational roads and quays (green areas) as defined by BHC. The Met Office provides BHC with special weather forecasts to facilitate these actions.

1.3.1 Primary Routes – Will be treated in accordance with the currently published Transport NI Winter Service Standards commencing 31st October and finishing mid-April. In the event of predicted low temperatures outside these dates gritting will be conducted to the same standards.

1.3.2 Secondary Roads & Operational Quays – Those Port operational roads and common user quays (designated as green areas) under the control of BHC will be treated in accordance with the Transport NI Winter Service Standards.

1.3.3 Areas under lease or licence – Treatment of areas under lease or licence to customers shall be the responsibility of the lease or licence holder, unless otherwise agreed in writing by BHC. Such premises will only be treated on receipt of a written annual acceptance of terms and form of indemnity from an authorised signatory of the lease or licence holder.

Details of the designated blue and green routes are available on request from BHC.

1.4 Neither Transport NI nor BHC have an absolute duty to provide winter road treatment given the qualification of “reasonably practical”. It is not practically possible either to:

- Provide the service on all parts of the road network, or:
- Ensure running surfaces are kept free of ice or snow at all times, even on the treated parts of the network.

1.5 Roads will, therefore, be cleared of snow and treated by salting in descending order of priority until such time as all the primary (blue) and secondary (green) routes are cleared. Then, if other roads are physically blocked or particularly hazardous and there is a need for access, further actions may be taken where resources permit.

1.6 Salt is not normally spread:

- When heavy rain is occurring, due to the risk of salt wash-off
- On dry roads where frost is not predicted to form
- In the middle of the night and on roads with few vehicles, as traffic is required to turn salt into de-icing solution

1.7 In common with Transport NI and Belfast City Council, BHC does not undertake to provide treatment services to footways and cycle ways (other than where agreed in writing with lease or licence holders), however these may benefit from adjacent road treatment activities

1.8 Salt bins and salt are provided at specific locations for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians as a means of self help to enable the treatment of small areas of carriageway or footway etc that would not normally be covered by routine salting operations. Salt bins are checked and filled prior to the winter service season and periodically checked and refilled during the winter season, frequency being dependent on the prevailing conditions.

2. ADVICE

2.1 The best advice to motorists is given in the Highway Code for Northern Ireland:

- Drive with care even if the roads have been salted
- Be prepared for the road conditions changing over relatively short distances
- Take care when overtaking salt spreading machines

You can get more information at this link:

- [Driving in adverse weather conditions](#)

2.2 Pedestrians should wear appropriate outdoor footwear with a good tread and exercise caution when walking in snow or icy conditions.