

From: **citi worker** <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, Mar 16, 2019 at 4:20 PM
Subject: poor service
To: <[REDACTED]@edmonton.ca>

Dear Citizens of Edmonton,

We the employees of the City of Edmonton, Parks and Roads Branch would like to extend a message to you the taxpayers to inform you of the decisions that are being made at your expense. Sometimes our memories may be a bit too short but you have no doubt noticed the decrease in winter maintenance service levels in comparison to previous years. This year's winter maintenance program has been absolutely appalling, as employees with years of experience in this organization we know that what is happening is wrong but we cannot speak up. We know that the decisions that are being made are not for the public's best interest but they are to serve the Senior Management agendas for council. In efforts to cut costs all they have done is contaminate our water systems and create havoc on road right of way infrastructure.

City administration has not adhered to it's Winter Maintenance Policy C409, despite the "Calcium Chloride" pilot project, the policy still stands. Sand was not applied (or very little), roads were not cleared properly for safe travel, bus stops and sidewalks received lower service levels than the bike lanes (for those 10 cyclists). During the deep freeze that began in January and into February instead of ensuring you the public is safe we were instructed to plow and not apply any sand to city streets. 100% salt has been used to compound the calcium chloride that was sprayed on the roads and at times on top of snow packed streets. The logic is that it would melt the snow but conditions were not favorable for these types of decisions as the LIQUID calcium chloride froze adding to the already unfavorable conditions. Operators who applied too much sand were punished, Sanders where used to apply 100% salt, yet these units are not designed for this material nor are they calibrated for that usage. Salt was used when temperatures were too low to recover from the disaster that is the calcium chloride project.

Parks and Roads Services (PARS) operational leadership were not prepared as previous leadership had been, they believed that applying calcium chloride will fix all the challenges a winter in Edmonton would bring. Calcium will make the winter maintenance program easier, we don't need to be prepared and have trained employees on the large pieces of equipment that accompany the public on our streets and sidewalks -- WRONG! Untrained personnel along with trained personnel have plowed this year, no additional hired graders were called in to help city forces as the money was spent on

calcium and salt. We did not have 200 pieces of equipment working at any one time. What budget savings they present as a result of the winter maintenance program they will spend it and then some in repairing the infrastructure that will be covered in pools of water from the spring melt. Water, more specifically salt water is detrimental to our roads, curbs and gutters and sidewalks.

The service levels we were asked to provide previous to our current leadership included safe and accessible transportation whether by car, bus or on foot. Current leadership provided you a contaminated environment with large windrows that have buried infrastructure (fire hydrants, crosswalks, corners, curbs that have narrowed driving lanes, boulevards and curb sides), created dangerous intersections due not only to icy conditions but sightlines. Your 311 calls were ignored. School zones were not cleared during the [Christmas](#) break as per previous years. The list goes on and if you read to policy you can see it for yourself.

The transportation priorities listed in the City of Edmonton Winter Maintenance Policy C409 are as follows:

Priority 1:

- Freeways, Arterial roadways:

Maintain to a bare pavement standard within 36 hours from end of snowfall

- Business districts, Busways:

Maintain to a bare pavement standard within 36 hours from end of snowfall

- Bus stops adjacent to City property:

Maintain to a bare pavement standard within 48 hours from end of snowfall

- Prioritized sidewalks, trails and bike routes:

Maintain to a bare pavement standard within 24 hours from end of snowfall

Priority 2

- Collector/Bus Route Roadways, Transit Park and Ride access roads:

Maintain to a bare pavement standard within 48 hours from end of snowfall.

Priority 3

- *Local Industrial Roadways:*

Maintain to a bare pavement standard within 5 days from the end of snowfall.

Priority 4

- Residential Roadways, Alleys:

Blade level snowpack, start within 48 hours after snowfall and complete in 5 days. Alleys adjacent to roadways subject to seasonal parking ban will be done first.

None of the above have been provided, in fact, management has publicly stated that clearing roads takes 2 weeks to complete, what was missing in that message is that it is due to inexperience on all

levels and the arrogance that this program is easy to manage. If you remember Bob Dunford when he was on the news, service levels were as per policy because we were held accountable and there has been no accountability for the last three winter seasons.

All experienced people who were involved with our operation were let go because they spoke up against the changes that we are being forced to adhere to. Our management team is making poor decisions and then panic and spread insane amounts of salt with little sand to cover up their mistake. In the spring of 2018 after a reasonable winter and the use of calcium chloride, there were reports that the river saw an increase in chloride levels by 4%. This spring after the large amount of calcium chloride and 100 % salt usage we wonder how that will affect our river and potentially our water tables.

The Calcium Chloride pilot project is suppose to come to an end this spring and a report to council is to be presented in June about the results and make some recommendations on whether or not the program was successful. We encourage you to ask your council the right questions, it is not just about our vehicles, it's about our environment, our taxes, our other city resources, our utility bill (remember Drainage is now with EPCOR). Once the "Pilot" project results are delivered, council should be asking other stakeholders in our organization about the draw on resources and how this change in service delivery is impacting each operation. When police and Emergency response are busy dealing with the hundreds of accidents due to poor road conditions what happens to the rest of us if we need them? If snow is not removed and gutters cleared how are we not to expect deteriorated road conditions and how are the boulevards suppose to dry so we can start our sweeping program. A delay in that causes a trickle effect into other programs citizens enjoy.

The truth that City Administration is hiding about the winter maintenance program is that Calcium Chloride does not work in our climate. Calcium Chloride was tested by the City of Edmonton 20 years ago, the difference between now and then is not the chemistry but the leaders that are making the decisions. Once the snow is gone, the damage will be visible again.

Welcome back Spring!