The Mayor declares a snow emergency based on a forecast of significant snowfall, accumulation speed, and time of day.

Motorists cannot park on snow emergency routes, indicated by red and white signs along larger commercial streets, while the emergency is in effect so that snowplows can clear these streets curb-to-curb. Vehicles parked on such routes can be ticketed and towed. If towed, call the Towed Vehicle Locator office at (202) 541-6083 or visit dpw.dc.gov/service/locate-towed-vehicle.

What is a Snow Emergency?

The Mayor declares a snow emergency based on a forecast of significant snowfall, accumulation speed, and time of day.

Motorists cannot park on snow emergency routes, indicated by red and white signs along larger commercial streets, while the emergency is in effect so that snowplows can clear these streets curb-to-curb.

Vehicles parked on such routes can be ticketed and towed. If towed, call the Towed Vehicle Locator office at (202) 541-6083 or visit dpw.dc.gov/service/locate-towed-vehicle.
What You Need to Know Ahead of Snow Season

When does the District Snow Team deploy?
Mayor Bowser deploys the District Snow Team based on findings from various sources, including the National Weather Service, as follows:

In advance of a winter weather event: The team pre-treats the roadways with a solution of salt, brine, and beet juice.
During a winter weather event: The team deploys snowplows to clear roadways.

What steps should residents and businesses take when traveling on roadways?
Take Metro as an alternative to driving. If you must drive:

• Drive cautiously and maintain safe speeds and distances from other vehicles, particularly emergency and snow vehicles.
• Use caution when attempting to pass a snowplow so drivers have enough room to safely do their jobs.
• Drive carefully on bridges, ramps, and other elevated structures as they tend to freeze faster than roadways.

When do I need to shovel my sidewalk?
After a winter weather event: Residents must clear their sidewalks and curb cuts in 24 hours of a snowstorm’s end. Commercial property owners are to clear their sidewalks within eight hours of a snowstorm’s end.

Exemption for seniors and residents with access and functional needs: You may be exempt from the snow shoveling requirement if you live in your own home and are 65 years or older and/or a person with a disability. To apply for the 2024–2025 exemptions, visit shovelexemption.dpw.dc.gov.

How is trash, recycling and leaf collection affected?
Winter weather events can cause delays or modifications to the Department of Public Works (DPW) standard operations, including leaf and sanitation collection. When snow, freezing rain or ice is forecasted, the District Snow Team (DST) hits the streets to salt and pretreat roads. This necessitates switching equipment and crews used for leaf collection to snow duties, which unfortunately causes delays.

How can I support my neighbors this winter?
Join ServeDC’s Volunteer Snow Team to help remove ice and snow at the homes of seniors and residents with access and functional needs. Sign up at servedc.galaxydigital.com/snow-team/.