

Hambden Township Road Department Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Q: I plan on paving my driveway.** What should I know about road resurfacing and my driveway?

A: When a road is resurfaced we typically add at least 3 inches of asphalt. You can plan on the resurfacing contractor to overlay an apron on the end of your driveway to transition to the new level of the road. Often, owners of concrete driveways do not like asphalt overlays on their concrete. The cost of a contractor cutting and replacing concrete to butt up to the asphalt is cost prohibitive to the township. If you stop the concrete at least 4 feet before the asphalt road surface, you can ensure that asphalt will not be overlaid onto your concrete and you'll have a smooth transition to the new road surface each time the road is paved. We try to resurface each road once every 15 years.

2. **Q: What is the "road right-of-way"?**

A: The road right-of-way is the area of your property in which a township/municipality/state may enter the property and perform maintenance such as ditch cleaning, tree trimming (to maintain sight distance), roadside mowing etc. The road rights-of-way typically extend 30' from the center of the road into your property. If we need to enter beyond the right-of-way we will ask you for a work agreement to enter your property (example: drainage ditch that extends through your property that we need to clean to maintain water flow). A work agreement is your permission for us to go beyond the right-of-way on your property.

3. **Q: Ditch Enclosures – can I enclose my ditch to make my yard easier to mow?**

A: Yes you can. You will need a permit from the township. This permit is for making sure you understand the rules and that you perform the enclosure the correct way. The necessary form and rules are on our website under Departments/Road Department. When you enclose a ditch you are responsible for the maintenance. If the enclosure fails (clogs, collapses etc) and you do not correct the issue, the township has the right to remove the enclosure to re-establish proper drainage flow. We will work with you to make sure the ditch enclosure is installed properly.

4. **Q: I need a new driveway pipe. Who do I call?**

A: The township will install the pipe if you purchase the pipe and the necessary gravel. Please e-mail or call us and we will give you the proper pipe size and information about what you will need and we'll do the rest.

5. **Q: Snowplowing and mailboxes – who's responsible for a damaged mailbox?**

A: The township is not responsible for mailboxes that are damaged by the snow/ice/slush that comes off the plow. If a plow makes direct contact with your mailbox we will repair or replace it (up to \$35 for the box). Drivers keep track as needed. It may take a day or two for us to get your box fixed depending on the severity of weather. Please make sure your mailbox is securely fastened to the post (bungee cords are not a good way to secure a mailbox).

6. **Snowplowing Dos and Don'ts**

- a) **Do not push snow in or across roads** – it freezes and causes damage to the cutting edges on our plows that cost several hundred dollars each. **If an accident occurs as a result of your plowing snow across the road you may be liable for damages.**

- b) **Do not pile snow in the middle of cul-de-sacs.** You are making more work for our drivers and time is of the essence when we're plowing. Often, we are working many hours cleaning the roads prior to school buses. Push snow off the side of your driveway.
- c) **Please pay attention to our flashing lights** and be patient if you get behind a plow. We cannot plow roads at normal road speeds – typically we have to plow roads at less than 25mph. Keep our crews safe and make sure they get home!
- d) **Do make sure that your trash cans are safely in your driveway** and not too close to the roads. Remember – the snow coming off the plows is coming off very fast and can knock things over.

7. **Q: My road seems like it doesn't get plowed enough**

A: We plow all roads the same number of times. No road receives more attention than any other. We have 3 trucks and they cover 25 miles of township roads. We typically start our routes at 2 AM to finish by the time the busses roll at 6AM. If we're having a snowstorm that lasts several hours the roads plowed first may not be in the best condition by the time we finish our first run. Please be patient as we typically have to take the trucks back in to re-load salt or get fuel. Our drivers also need a break, food & drink. We also have to clear snow at the fire department and cemeteries. We also have trouble spots with drifts near farm fields that take extra time to clear when a storm is persistent.

8. **Q: The township cleared my ditch of cattails – why?**

A: Cattails are an invasive plant and cause drainage issues in ditches. We clear them to maintain drainage flow. We regularly inspect our roads, culverts, and signs to keep you safe on our roads. Clearing vegetation and trees are an operation of ensuring sight distance on our roads. If you keep your ditch clean – it helps us get to more important work.

9. **Ditches:** Please keep rocks and debris away from the flow of water in your ditch. Often you can alter the flow of water which may cause erosion or silt to clog your drive pipe. While many enclose their ditches, an open ditch allows us to easily inspect and assess the flow of water to prevent driveway and/or road flooding.

10. **Q: How much does it cost to resurface a road?**

A: As of 2021 it costs approximately \$225,000 per mile to make repairs, resurface, and install new berms on a road. This cost can fluctuate between \$200,000 and \$240,000 per mile depending on the extent of repairs to the base or drainage improvements needed. Culvert replacements typically cost between \$25,000 and \$80,000 per pipe depending on the size of the pipe and any erosion repairs. Road striping costs \$2,500 per mile.

11. **Q: Where does road funding come from?**

A: Road funding solely comes from 2 tax levies paid through your real estate tax bill, gas tax paid when you buy gas in Hambden, and a portion of license plate fees. We cannot use other funds to pay for road improvements by law. This money goes to pay for road crew salaries, trucks, fuel, supplies, (crack sealing material, gravel, pipes, road patching material, equipment repairs, road salt) and resurfacing to name a few items.