

## Gritting material is available at the municipal depots

Grit and granulate can be obtained from builder's merchants (Yellow Pages) for money.

Our Tip: During opening hours, gritting material in commercial quantities is also handed out for free at the municipal depots.

**Depots of the environmental services Umweltbetrieb:**  
Mitte Eckendorfer Straße 57, Oldentrup Am Wiehagen 75,  
Schildesche Engersche Straße 245,  
Sennestadt Industriestraße 40.

Please remember to bring your own container, e.g. a 10-litre bucket. In addition you are also allowed to take sand from the municipal playgrounds and use it as gritting material. It goes without saying that the sandpits will be filled up again with fresh sand in spring.

## Spreading salt – as little as possible

On the streets the staff of the municipal service and on the roads the staff of the North-Rhine Westphalian state road maintenance service do indeed use salt for de-icing surfaces. If they used grit, they would have to continue gritting all the time in order to achieve a similar effect. Research carried out by the Federal Environment Agency has shown that the increased gritting frequency and the subsequent sweeping of the roads have a much worse effect on the environment overall, especially since state-of-the-art spreaders and the use of brine have significantly reduced the amount of salt spread.

## When is the snow plough going to come?

As the gritters cannot be everywhere at the same time after snowfalls and when black ice has formed, snow clearing and gritting are organised according to priority. The winter service will first treat the main thoroughfares as well as highly frequented roads before turning to less used streets.

## Any further questions? Feel free to contact us!

Information (in German) on the allocation of streets to winter service categories, on opening hours of the municipal depots, on your duties as property owner etc. is available from:

**Ordnungsamt** (0521) 51 22 97 and  
**Umweltbetrieb der Stadt Bielefeld**, (0521) 51 38 10

**Umweltbetrieb  
der Stadt Bielefeld**

**Umweltbetrieb der Stadt Bielefeld**  
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# Bielefeld

## Stadtreinigung

# Winter Maintenance Service

Information on snow clearing and gritting  
duties during the winter season



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## Information on snow clearing and gritting duties during the winter season

One man's joy is another man's sorrow: the annually recurring magnificent wintery landscapes. While some people are gliding merrily down the slopes or enjoying a walk through the glittering snow, snowfall to others means the bothersome duty to clear away the snow.

Winter maintenance service falls partly within the remit of the City of Bielefeld, partly it is the responsibility of the respective state government departments and partly also the duty of property owners.

## Property owners are not the only ones obliged to get shovelling!

According to the street-sweeping by-laws, property owners as well as community associations of properties adjoining a street are obliged to remove snow and ice from the footway as soon as the snow stopped falling or the ice forming, respectively.

This duty can – and de facto often is – transferred to the tenants. If the winter maintenance duty is transferred, no exceptions can be made, as for the sake of general fairness nobody must be exempt from these duties.

It should go without saying that elderly or frail senior citizens are supported in their snow-clearing duties. If necessary, professional services may be employed.

Our tip: Various gardening and industrial cleaning firms as well as student services offer their help. Leafing through the Yellow Pages will usually produce some results.

**Caution: For cost reasons, many footpaths in public parks and greens will not be cleared and gritted. So you should be extremely careful when taking a walk in these areas in winter in order to avoid slipping and nasty falls.**

## Snow clearing and gritting duties

Streets and footways in Bielefeld are classified into several maintenance categories. This classification regulates which property owner is obliged to shovel snow in which area. You will find the respective maintenance category on your tax bill, or otherwise find out by contacting 0521 51 38 10 or the internet on [www.umweltbetrieb-bielefeld.de](http://www.umweltbetrieb-bielefeld.de).

## Maintenance categories

11; 21; 22; 23; 25; 32, 33; 35; 42; 45:  
winter maintenance for footways only

08; 10; 20; 30:  
winter maintenance service for footpaths, footways and drainage gutters along narrowing lanes (for instance in case of traffic islands and pedestrian crossings with central refuges).

07: winter maintenance service for carriageways and footways

## Obligatory gritting between 7am and 8pm

Once the snow has stopped falling or ice has stopped to form, respectively, snow and ice have to be removed immediately between 7am and 8pm on weekdays, 9am and 8pm on Sundays. After 8pm there is principally no obligation to clear away snow and ice.

## Footways and hazardous spots on carriageways have to be kept clear

Footways have to be kept clear of snow and ice along a width allowing pedestrian traffic, at most a width of 1.5 metres, though. In addition, pavements at stops for public transport and school buses as well as pedestrian crossings have to be kept clear of snow and gritted in icy conditions in order to guarantee safe access and exit.

If there is no specially marked footway in traffic-calmed streets, the roadside (1.5m) has to be kept clear of snow and ice.

If owners of properties abutting onto streets are obliged by the by-laws regulating winter maintenance service to clear the carriageway as well (maintenance category 07),

hazardous spots on the carriageway have to be treated with traction-increasing or de-icing agents. This applies in particular to road junctions difficult to negotiate, sharp bends and steep inclines.

While separate cycle paths are part of the carriageway – and thus cleared and gritted by the local authorities – the same does not apply to combined footway and cycle paths. In this case winter maintenance service has to be provided by the respective owner of the adjoining property.

## Avoid causing obstructions through giant "snow heaps"

The snow has to be piled onto the part of the pavement bordering the carriageway or – where this is not possible – onto the roadside in such a way that vehicle and pedestrian traffic is not endangered or obstructed more than absolutely necessary.

In addition, manholes and gullies should be kept clear of snow and ice in order to allow melt waters to run off freely. The same applies to fire hydrants.

## Use traction-increasing materials – for the sake of the environment!

If public footways are covered in hard-packed snow and/or ice, they have to be treated with traction-increasing materials. As a matter of principle, salt or other de-icing agents are banned on public footways for reasons of environmental protection. They are only allowed by way of an exception, if traction-increasing materials do not achieve sufficiently safe results, e.g. on black ice or on streets with a steep incline.

In any case, care has to be taken to keep the greatest possible distance from nearby vegetation. For reasons of environmental protection, spreading salt should also be avoided on private property.