



SIMA-10-2025

Standard Practice for Procuring and Planning Snow and Ice Management Services

an American National Standard



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Foreword

This foreword will not be considered part of the SIMA-10-2025 Standard Practice for Procuring and Planning Snow and Ice Management.

As the only non-profit snow industry trade association in the United States, the mission of the Snow & Ice Management Association (SIMA) is empowering snow and ice management professionals for success. After creating several Best Practices Guidelines, SIMA recognized the need for formal, verified standards that are easily understood and readily adopted by all industry stakeholders. To accomplish this, SIMA was approved as an ANSI Accredited Standards Developer in August 2018.

Development of ANSI recognized standards will enable social, economic, and environmental guidelines of policy and practice for all stakeholders regarding the following: 1) Delivery of safe and cost-efficient winter management operations and service verification; 2) Continuation of emergency services, commerce, public, and social activities; 3) Environmentally responsible awareness and use of salt and other anti-icing and de-icing products.

The Standard Practice for Procuring and Planning Snow and Ice Management Services was developed to provide snow and ice management service providers, property owners and their agents standardized methods of planning and preparing for winter events. Current practices result in inconsistent terms, lack of clarity, and unmet expectations.

The Standard Practice for Procuring and Planning Snow and Ice Management Services became an ANSI National Standard in January 2020. Standards are reviewed on a 5-year schedule, and the standard was reviewed and updated in 2025.

SIMA oversees the Standards Development Committee (SDC), responsible for proposing and developing SIMA standards and assigning and monitoring Stakeholder Advisory Groups (SAG) to develop content for standards.

At the writing of this standard, group members were:

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To learn more about SIMA Standards, go to www.sima.org/standards. Information requests regarding this document must be forwarded to SIMA Standards Administrator, Ellen Lobello, at ellen@sima.org.

This standard is issued under the fixed designation SIMA-10-2025; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. R indicates a revision not yet approved.

1. Scope, Purpose and Application

1.1 Scope

A procurement and planning standard for snow and ice management services is essential due to the varying size and complexity of sites. Numerous variables can affect service delivery before, during, and after a winter weather event. Therefore, a standard is needed to guide property owners and their representatives in identifying the services, actions, and systems required to maintain safe conditions.

1.2 Purpose

This standard practice provides guidance on the snow and ice management procurement and planning process to aid in the creation of requests for proposals (RFPs), contracts, and monitoring and documentation procedures that are clearly understood by all stakeholders.

1.3 Application

This standard is intended to apply to property and facility owners, owner agents or consultants, site managers, and service providers involved in snow and ice management procurement and planning.

2. General Procurement

2.1 The RFP process should begin no later than May to allow sufficient time to review sites, update site assessments, allocate time to eliminate or mitigate hazards, negotiate pricing and ensure contracts for sites and portfolios of sites are awarded no later than September 1.

2.2 RFPs should, at a minimum, include the following:

2.2.1 *Buyer introduction and background* – The background information of the buyer and a brief description of their business.

2.2.2 *Project scope* – Clear details regarding the level of service expectations, scope of work and site plan as identified in Section 3 of this standard.

2.2.3 *Inspections* – Identification of existing hazards and hazard elimination activities planned during the winter season as documented in Section 4 of this standard.

2.2.4 *Labor restrictions* – Any restrictions related to subcontracting of services, including but not limited to no subcontracting is allowed or primary subcontracting only. Subcontracting of services is subject to the provisions of this Standard Practice.

2.3 All contracts, including any modifications, shall be in writing and signed by both parties.

2.4 Designate a minimum one-year contract (ideally multi-year or annually renewable where possible) with cancellation clauses for both parties to ensure consistency and to account for potential weather volatility in a winter season.

2.5 Contracted service dates should encompass the typical winter season in the market area.

3. Level of Service (LOS) and Scope of Work (SOW)

3.1 Signed contracts shall clearly define and document the required Level of Service (LOS), Scope of Work (SOW) and snow and ice management site plan.

3.2 LOS expectations should include but are not limited to the following:

3.2.1 *Description of outcomes* – The end result expected from snow and ice management services. Descriptors should not exceed the term “substantially clear of hazards.”

3.2.2 *Service initiation* – Service initiator(s) that identify when services should be dispatched. Include any scenarios in which triggers or accumulation thresholds may change, considering extended and severe weather events.

3.2.3 *Timeframes* – Critical timeframes, including but not limited to times for site to receive service; key hours when the public frequent the site, employee traffic and shift changes; delivery times; lighting activation schedules; site surveillance schedules by the assigned party; hazard response timing; service call timing; and other factors that could impact snow and ice management effectiveness.

3.2.4 *Service priorities* – Priority areas that require specific actions to achieve desired outcomes and timing, as outlined in Section 3.2.3. These include but are not limited to site ingress and egress for emergency responder access; sidewalks; building entrances and exits; handicap parking stalls; and delivery ramps.

3.2.5 *Post-storm requirements* – Services that are expected to occur after completion of a winter event, including expectations for severe and/or extended weather events.

3.2.6 *Service controls* – Parties (and any associated individuals/positions) that have decision-making authority for starting or continuing service, adding services outside of the contractually agreed upon LOS and SOW, and stopping service before or during an event. Include any associated parameters and expectations.

3.2.7 *Site monitoring and hazard treatment* – Assign parties and responsibilities for site surveillance and service call action. Documentation should explain how assigned duties will effectively address site hazards, which include but are not limited to thaw-refreeze of snow piles; ice formation that arises after event service; and ice formation due to site-specific issues outlined in Section 4.3.1 of this standard.

3.2.8 *Service call system* – When reasonably and effectively established and followed, service call systems buttress weather monitoring activities. The owner/owner’s agent shall provide a communication plan that includes current phone numbers and email addresses of identified parties that can respond to issues including but not limited to complaints, LOS/SOW changes, incidents, and damage reports.

3.3 Scope of Work (SOW). The SOW for each site and the specific activities to be performed shall be clearly defined, documented and agreed upon by all parties. The SOW should include but is not limited to:

3.3.1 *Service areas* – Site boundaries, service areas and services to be provided, referencing the timing outlined in Section 3.2.3 and adhering to the requirements in Section 3.2.4 and 3.2.7. Note site-specific issues that may impact neighboring properties, including but not limited to shared parking lots with different owners or adjacent properties owned by schools or municipalities.

- 3.3.2 Acceptable services** – Services to manage snow and ice, including but not limited to snow removal, snow clearing, snow hauling, deicing, ice monitoring and anti-icing.
- 3.3.3 Material use** – Identify the chemicals/compounds that may be used, as well as those that are prohibited due to site-specific structural or environmental restrictions. Determine and outline whether materials can be stored on site and any guidelines related to storage location and access.
- 3.3.4 Equipment requirements** – Identify required equipment and any equipment that is prohibited based on the equipment's weight and height. Dedicated equipment requirements must be clearly indicated, including approved staging areas.
- 3.3.5 Staking** – Define if the service provider is responsible for installing and removing snow stakes and timing of removal.

4. Site Assessments

- 4.1** When developing a LOS, SOW or site plan, an owner, owner agent or consultant, or site manager with a minimum of three winter seasons' experience should create a written site assessment that identifies site-specific risks and hazards that may impact safety, snow and ice management activities or contribute to deicer overapplication.
- 4.2** As part of the RFP process, the owner, owner agent or consultant or site manager should accompany the service provider to conduct a site assessment of the following:
 - 4.2.1 Ingress or egress roads and walkways** – Entrance and exit routes, as well as any obstructions or site-specific variables that may cause service or egress issues.
 - 4.2.2 Accessibility** – Structures or services that may hinder access and prevent services from occurring. These may include but are not limited to locked gates, security areas, and hours of operation.
 - 4.2.3 Environmental and sustainability** – Site proximity to rivers, streams, lakes, groundwater wells, sensitive parks, refuges or reserves; and local or state environmental regulations related to private and public surface and groundwater.
 - 4.2.4 Architectural** – Structures that may create adverse conditions during or between events, including but not limited to parking lot obstructions; slopes or drainage issues; damaged or subpar structures, site areas or concrete; awnings or overhangs; and elevated surfaces and parking decks. Structures shall be identified, analyzed, and addressed with a solution that includes protocols, contract amendments, or the assignment of personnel to manage conditions that are not or cannot be eliminated.
 - 4.2.5 Obstacles** – All areas or structures that may obstruct the ability to provide service or that prevent snow equipment access. These items include but are not limited to cart corrals, dumpsters, islands, bollards, speed bumps, and parked vehicles.
 - 4.2.6 Priority areas** – Surfaces or structures that require extra attention to ensure safety and public access (e.g., fire hydrants, emergency exits, handicapped parking, etc.).

4.3 A preseason site inspection shall be the responsibility of all contracted parties.

4.3.1 Identify and document potential safety hazards that the property owner should repair or replace. These include but are not limited to tactile devices affixed to the ground; broken curbs; potholes; speed bumps; clogged downspouts; overhangs; car stops; redirection of water into pedestrian areas; components left after the removal of signs, bollards and stair railings; or anything that may cause or contribute to a hazard.

4.3.2 Define the party responsible for repairing damages that were not identified in preseason photos and/or documented during a preseason walkthrough; in-season inspection(s); or walkthroughs during the RFP process.

4.3.3 Within 30 days of the end of a typical winter season in the market, site management and the service provider shall conduct a joint site inspection to address any problems, including identifying and documenting any damage, necessary repairs, and establishing a timeline for completion.

4.4 A site map shall be created for each site by the owner or competent individual assigned for the site assessment. This map should at a minimum include accurate property boundaries; accurate areas to be serviced; areas approved for stacking; high-priority areas; and locations for salt bins and equipment staging. The map should include a grid to identify areas referenced in the LOS, SOW, or site plan. A coordinate map is also useful for identifying hazards that are not being eliminated and/or referencing guidance given in the LOS, SOW, or site plan.

5. Documentation

5.1 Any procurement process should include clearly defining, documenting and assigning responsibilities for billing and communication.

5.1.1 *Billing requirements* – Define the level of detail required when invoicing for services performed and timeframe for invoice submissions (e.g., 72 hours, 7 days, 30 days after service).

5.1.2 *Technology requirements* – Define technology requirements that must be used for reporting (e.g., work order system, invoicing system, documentation portal) and/or verification of service (e.g., Global Positioning System [GPS]).

5.1.3 *Communication requirements* – Identify the flow of communication between all related parties before, during and after service. This may include dealing with service failure, emergencies or injuries onsite, and complaints.

5.2 Prior to the season, the service provider shall provide a site engineering plan that identifies details including but not limited to service areas; priority areas; key obstacles; and logistical information such as where snow will be piled and equipment and materials will be staged.

5.3 The service provider shall create site documentation and recordkeeping for each event. The report should include, but is not limited to:

- Site name and location
- Names of operator(s) and on-site managers
- Date(s) of service
- Start and end times of service, including any site patrols
- Condition of physical site upon start and completion of service
- Weather conditions at time of service, including but not limited to air and ground temperatures; and circumstances that affect the ability to service, including but not limited to dangerous wind chills and low visibility. This may include reports from a verified weather forecasting service.
- Services rendered
- Equipment used
- Materials applied (types and amounts)
- GPS recordkeeping (if used)
- Notes/special circumstances or conditions

6. Referenced Documents and Resources

SIMA Purchasing Snow & Ice Management: Quality RFP Creation and Best Practices

Available from the Snow & Ice Management Association

www.sima.org/bestpractices

Snow and Ice Management Standard Glossary of Terms

Available from the Snow & Ice Management Association

www.sima.org/bestpractices

Snow & Ice Management Site Risk Evaluation Example

Available from Landscape Ontario

bit.ly/4dAdmxg

7. Definitions

- 7.1 Accumulation Threshold** – The agreed-upon maximum amount of snow or ice accumulation acceptable.
- 7.2 Anti-icing** – The act of applying a deicer chemical (a liquid or a solid) to a surface before the storm starts in an effort to prevent ice from forming and bonding to the surface or to enhance plowing efforts.
- 7.3 Deicing** – The act of applying a deicer chemical (typically a solid or pre-wet solid) to an accumulation of ice or snow in an effort to melt it and weaken its bond to the surface.
- 7.4 Event** – A meteorological weather system with a defined start and stop time that produces any type or combination of precipitation from the sky. This may include but is not limited to any or all of the following: ice, snow, hail, sleet, and freezing rain.
- 7.5 Ice Monitoring** – A contractually agreed upon service in which one or more people visit a site to monitor for signs of ice accumulation.
- 7.6 Ice** – The solid form of water. Ice forms only when water is exposed to temperatures below freezing.
- 7.7 In-house performance** – A party that performs services (whole or in part) directly using its own employees or resources, rather than engaging an owner agent, external service provider or third-party contractor.
- 7.8 Level of Service (LOS)** – A description of the expected outcome(s) on a site or set of sites from the completed performance of snow and ice management services. Level of Service typically defines expectations for surface conditions at specific times (completion times) or timeframes, or alternate/additional expectations for events that exceed a defined timeframe and/or a defined amount of accumulation(s).
- 7.9 Procurement** – A purchasing process that controls quantity, quality, sourcing and timing to ensure the best possible total cost of ownership.
- 7.10 Scope of Work (SOW)** – Defines the service criteria and specific areas to be serviced on a site or set of sites.
- 7.11 Service Area** – Specific locations on a site where some portion of work will be performed as a part of the service agreement.
- 7.12 Service Initiator** – A contractually defined start of one or more snow and ice management services. Service initiators include but are not limited to trigger depth; accumulation threshold; weather forecast; written client request; automated or tech-enabled service request or work order; established by patrol protocol or site inspection; or as otherwise defined in the written LOS, SOW or site plan.
- 7.13 Service Provider** – A compensated person or business that provides snow and ice management services to one or multiple clients.
- 7.14 Site** – The property or collection of contiguous properties where services are to be performed.
- 7.15 Site Engineering Plan** – A visual representation of a site created by the service provider to guide personnel on service delivery.

- 7.16** *Site Map* – A visual map of a site or set of sites used for bidding snow services and serving as a basis for creating a Site Engineering Plan.
- 7.17** *Site Plan* – A documented plan of action to achieve a site that is substantially clear of hazards during the winter season. The site plan includes but is not limited to hazard identification and mitigation assignments or protocols; elimination actions or planned eliminations; timings; service/area priorities; service initiators; and surveillance.
- 7.18** *Snow* – Precipitation in the form of ice crystals. It originates in clouds when temperatures are below the freezing point, when water vapor in the atmosphere condenses directly into ice without going through the liquid stage. Once an ice crystal has formed, it absorbs and freezes additional water vapor from the surrounding air, growing into a snow crystal or snow pellet, which then falls to Earth.
- 7.19** *Snow and Ice Management* – The combination of all business practices and operational procedures used to prevent or mitigate the effects of snow and ice accumulation on a site or set of sites.
- 7.20** *Snow Clearing* – The moving of accumulated snow from the surface of a defined service area.
- 7.21** *Snow Removal* – The physical act of taking snow completely away from a site during or after an event.
- 7.22** *Snow Stacking* – The process of creating a large pile of snow for storage or temporary staging.
- 7.23** *Trigger Depth* – The agreed upon measurable amount of accumulated snow or ice wherein snow and ice management services will be dispatched.