

City of Rochester, Minnesota Frequently Asked Questions on Seasonal Parking Requirements



Seasonal Parking Requirements

1. What are the seasonal parking requirements?

On September 16, 2019 City Council adopted Seasonal Parking Requirements (Rochester Code of Ordinances Section 11-6-49). The ordinance, or law, implements alternate side parking requirements for vehicles parked on city streets and prohibits parking in the bulb (circular part) of cul-de-sacs from October 1 to May 1.

2. What is alternate side parking?

Alternate side parking means that on most city streets, parking will only be allowed on one side of the street at a time between the hours of 2 a.m. and 3 p.m. every day. The side you can park on will switch – or alternate – based on the day of the month so that there is an opportunity to ensure the full street can be kept clear as much as possible throughout the time snow is possible in Rochester.

3. Why implement alternate side parking?

Alternate side parking increases the efficiency and effectiveness of snow removal on city streets. Most importantly, this allows emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances to reach residents in an emergency. Additionally, effective snow removal creates safer roads for everyone, including large vehicles like buses, delivery vehicles, and garbage trucks.

4. Was there a problem before?

Streets become narrower with each snowstorm when plows are not able to clear curb-to-curb. Some neighborhood streets are narrow to begin with and, by the end of winter, it is difficult for even small vehicles to navigate if plows haven't been able to adequately clear snow. Public safety is at risk when there is no room for equipment like snow plows, fire trucks, police squad cars, and ambulances to drive down the street.

5. Why does alternate side parking start on October 1?

Trees drop their leaves in October and having parking requirements in place will greatly increase the efficiency of street sweepers. Being able to better clear the streets will reduce the likelihood of stormwater infrastructure being plugged with leaves, which can cause localized flooding, and help protect area waterways from polluted runoff. Snow and ice events often happen in October and parking requirements will allow plows to clear from curb-to-curb.

6. Why do parking requirements last until May 1?

Large late-spring snowstorms are common and plowing operations will continue to benefit from alternate side parking. In the absence of snow, alternate side parking will enable street sweepers to be more effective and efficient picking up sand and other debris that accumulated over winter.

7. What time of day is alternate side parking enforced? Can I park on both sides of the street outside of that time?

Alternate side parking requirements are in place between 2 a.m. and 3 p.m. every day. While cars can be parked on both sides of the street in the evening hours, drivers should park their vehicles overnight in accordance with the requirements that are in place the following day from 2 a.m. to 3 p.m.

8. Are these requirements in place on weekends and holidays?
Yes, this policy applies every day of the week and on holidays.
9. How do I know which side of the street is even or odd?
The even side of the street is the side of the street with address numbers ending in even numbers (0, 2, 4, 6, 8 e.g. 122 Apple Drive and 2000 Plum Street). The odd side of the street is the side of the street with address numbers ending in odd numbers (1, 3, 5, 7, 9; 401 Maple Avenue and 5009 Jefferson Lane).
10. Will I ever park on the same side of the street two days in a row?
Some months have 31 days which will result in vehicles needing to park on the odd side of the street for two days in a row. Back-to-back days of parking on the odd side of the street will occur on:
- October 31 and November 1
 - December 31 and January 1
 - January 31 and February 1
 - February 29 and March 1
 - March 31 and April 1
11. Can I park in the round part of a cul-de-sac?
Parking is prohibited at all times within the bulb (round part) at the end of all cul-de-sacs from October 1 to May 1. Cul-de-sacs are challenging areas to plow due to the lack of space to maneuver the large equipment and store snow. Not allowing parking these areas will be more efficient for snow removal in the cul-de-sac.
12. Does this apply to metered parking spots?
No, this requirements does not apply to metered spaces. Parked vehicles must comply with the posted signs.
13. What if my street only allows parking on one side of the street?
The requirements do not apply to streets with parking on only one side; vehicles can park on the side of the street that allows parking regardless of the calendar day. There may be instances when temporary parking requirements are put in place for these areas to allow plows to clear to the curb.
14. What if my street doesn't allow parking at any time?
There will continue to be no parking on streets that do not allow parking at any time.
15. Do I need to adhere to parking requirements if I have a residential parking permit?
Yes, alternate side parking requirements apply to all city streets. Residential parking permit zones are used to maintain on-street parking areas for neighborhood residents. The needs for and benefits of alternate side parking are the same in these zones.
16. Does this parking policy apply when there is no snow in the forecast or on the ground?
Alternate side parking requirements apply from October 1 to May 1, regardless of the weather forecast or if there is snow and ice on the roadways.
17. How do I report a vehicle that is improperly parked?
Improperly parked vehicles can be reported via the police non-emergency line at 507-328-6800.
18. Do alternate side parking requirements apply to private roads that the city does not clear?
Alternate side parking requirements apply to roads under the city's jurisdiction. They do not apply to private roads, county roads or state roads.

Tickets, Fees & Towing

19. How much does the ticket cost?

Fines for tickets related to seasonal parking requirements were set in the fee schedule at \$25 for both 2019 and 2020. View the official City of Rochester Fee Schedule to see fines in future years.

20. Why can't the officer cancel my parking ticket if I arrive while they are writing it?

If an officer was writing a ticket, it means your vehicle should have been moved by the time they got there. The officer cannot cancel the ticket because once they start writing tickets they are accountable for each ticket. If you have already gotten a ticket, please move your vehicle to avoid getting towed.

21. Why did I get a ticket or get towed after the street was cleared?

Parking requirements remain in place regardless of whether or not the street has been cleared.

22. Where do I find my car after it has been towed?

Contact the police non-emergency line at 507-328-6800 for information on towed vehicles. Your license plate number will be required to locate the vehicle.

Snow Emergencies

23. How is this different than a snow emergency?

A snow emergency may be declared when a forecasted snow event presents a concern for the removal of snow and the movement of emergency vehicles, transit buses, and the public. Snow emergencies typically call for additional parking requirements and eliminate the typical waiting period before towing improperly parked vehicles.

24. How can I find out if a Snow Emergency has been declared?

There are several ways the public is notified that a Snow Emergency has been declared, including: local media coverage, rochestermn.gov, social media, and Rochester Alerts. Subscribe to Rochester Alerts (<https://alerts.rochestermn.gov/>) to receive an email and/or text when a Snow Emergency has been declared.