



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

DATE: August 26, 2015

TO: St. Paul District Councils District Councils Collaborative
Advisory Committee on Aging Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities
Block Nurse/Elder/Chore programs St Paul Smart Trips

FROM: Ricardo Cervantes-Director, Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI)

RE: Snowy/Icy Sidewalks

Issue:

It is not uncommon for some property owners to fail to keep public sidewalks clear during the winter resulting in a Department of Safety and Inspections violation notice and City sponsored abatement (see figure 1 below). Approximately 20% of those City abated properties generate additional complaints/abatements throughout the year which demonstrates that sidewalks on those properties may be snow/ice covered for extended periods of time, on multiple occasions throughout the winter, prior to abatement by the City contractor. These hazards pose a serious safety concern to those who use these sidewalks in winter months.

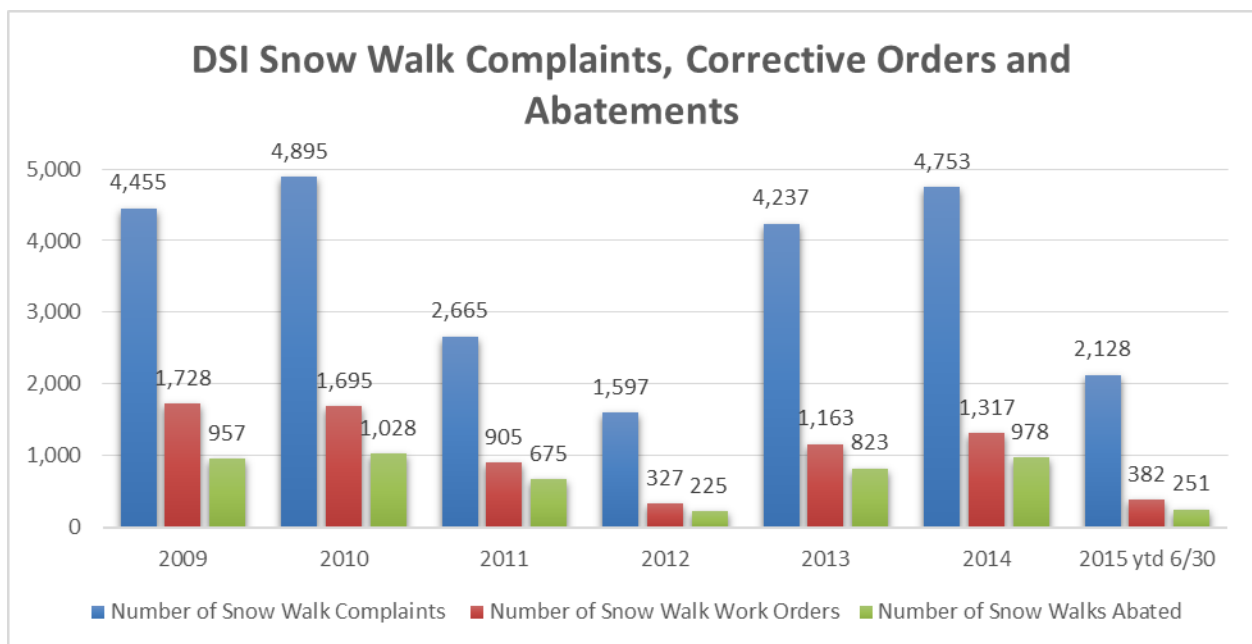


Figure 1. Historical Snow Walk Data

Background:

Section 113 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code requires owners of any building or lot to remove snow/ice from public sidewalks within 24 hours following a snow event. If the owner fails to remove the resulting snow or ice and a complaint is received, Department of Safety and Inspections staff will inspect the property and issue a notice requiring the owner to remove the snow/ice within



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the following 48 hours. Should the owner fail to remove the snow/ice following this notification, the City contractor clears the sidewalk, and the owner is invoiced accordingly.

Frequently, the same property owners fail to clean the public sidewalk numerous times during a winter. The current abatement process typically takes seven to ten days to correct and consequently results in frequent and extended periods of time where sidewalks are left in a hazardous condition.

Proposal:

Amend Section 113 to reduce the time between a snow/ice complaint and the abatement for those properties that have received a snow/ice violation, resulting in a City ordered abatement, in the previous 365 days. Those owners who have demonstrated an inability to maintain the sidewalk during the winter will be subject to immediate abatements for future valid complaints in the same 365 days. This amendment will reduce the time needed to abate the snow/ice hazards on the sidewalk of a previous violator from 7-10 days to approximately four days and provides for much safer St. Paul sidewalks during the winter months.

Timeline/process:

The City Council will have a public hearing on this ordinance on Wednesday, September 2, at 5:30pm, in City Council Chambers (3rd Floor City Hall, 15 W Kellogg Blvd). If you cannot attend the public hearing but want to submit comments, you can email ward1-7@ci.stpaul.mn.us.