

# Down and Dirty with Goffstown DPW

*February 2012*

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The month started out as mild a February as I can ever recall.

We continued with our grader ditching operations...

It was brought to my attention that perhaps I should explain the purpose of this operation. In short, water is the number one enemy of your roads. Ditching simply allows an area for the water to get off and away from the road. The grader is but one tool in the toolbox to accomplish this. Some areas are also cut back to allow for more snow storage. While that hasn't been a huge problem this winter the space will remain for years to come when winters get back to normal.

While the crew with the grader has continued marching the excavator crew has been following behind doing some additional clean up, fine tuning and installing check dams for erosion control.



This is taken out on the middle section of East Dunbarton Road at the intersection of Jenny Lane.



This is a section of Tirrell Hill Road.

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DPW also worked with Parks and Rec at Barnard Park removing some stumps and working to restore an area behind the tennis courts. Since we just started there on Leap Year Day, I'm certain we'll be doing more there in the next month.



We've also employed the use of a rental mini-excavator to get caught up on some other drainage repairs that our machine could not access.

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Once again, taking advantage of the weather and the recently reconditioned Vaccon Truck, we've also started on some of the drainage maintenance work. You may recognize Dalton Clark and George Maloney as they clean a culvert on New Boston Road that needed repair. They spend a good part of the year making the rounds between drainage and sewer maintenance. In addition to service calls, 1/3 of the sewer gets cleaned each year. They also get around to the various drainage systems in town cleaning catch basins and culverts.



Speaking of culvert repairs, design work for the reclamation of the remaining sections of Addison Road is in the final stages. Jeff Sarette and Alex Canaan inspect a stone box culvert to determine what steps will be taken to preserve it..

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It's important for people to be aware that none of the stuff in the field can happen without Shop Foreman, Mark Urella, and mechanics, Cassidy Barriere and Zeb Burnham in the shop keeping things rolling. In addition to DPW equipment, they also maintain Police, Fire and Parks and Rec equipment. Above Zeb is doing some work on Tower 1. He's also recently rebuilt the grade bucket on the excavator getting it ready for another busy season. Zeb is quite the skilled fabricator.



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This winter season has been helpful in that we've been able to keep a brush crew going. Not always possible if you have 4' snow banks. Even without the snow, reality is with 130 +/- miles of road, hand work isn't going to keep up with it – much less catch up. This is where a mowing machine comes in. It can cover much more ground in a shorter period of time.

What's unusual is we're doing roadside mowing in February! Even the contractor we've hired has never mowed this time of year but it's just been one of those winters so he came in a few months early. *"As long as I can see it I can mow it."*



There's no getting around it – our roadside mowing program has gotten a bit behind in the last few years and many areas are becoming overgrown with brush. Those are the types of operations that suffer when you're rebuilding from the wrath of Mother Nature. Four seasons of flood events and several other factors have taken their toll. Even though we believe we are going to be back on track after this season, the downside is until the springtime growth comes back in, it might be a bit ugly.

The good news is, once we're back on a regular mowing schedule, the curse should be taken off as the stumps go back to nature and the size of the growth isn't allowed to get as large as some of it has.

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Of course, as soon as all of this work and equipment is lined up and scheduled, Mother Nature has to remind us who's boss. Leap Day brought more snow than we've had all winter. October was officially fall :) Just goes to show you that planning around the weather – good or bad - is always hit or miss.

Below, Don Hebert works his way around his route. As you can see, there isn't always a lot of room for the plow trucks. Please give them the space they need so they can clear the roads for you.



This snow will bring the mowing and possibly some of our other projects to a halt for at least a few days. We do have some other projects planned to fill that time if that turns out to be the case.

With any luck, this return to winter will be short-lived and we'll be able to continue with our road maintenance into the spring.