

2018 Snow Removal Research and Results

There was a serious snow storm in 2018 where none of the EHT communities were plowed. The VGEM community had a meeting on the topic but no facts were presented, only sides were taken and irrational statements were made. As a result, the following research was performed and the relevant facts surfaced.

The snow removal research was offered to the VGEM Board via email exchange and to another EHT community. With the next snow storm all the EHT communities were plowed as should be expected.

The lesson is go find the facts and clearly communicate to those affected. Do not try to explain away serious failures without proper research and the facts.

February 2018

Hello,

To try and understand the snow removal issue I pulled the budget for Cherry Hill and Egg Harbor Township and searched for "public works" items. I also pulled the population info to gauge the size of each place.

Not sure if you can use this info but here it is, enjoy.

Public Works

54 full time employees EHT
75 full time employees Cherry Hill

\$550,000 equipment cost EHT
\$465,450 equipment cost Cherry Hill

<https://www.cherryhill-nj.com/754/Certified-State-Budget>
<http://ehtgov.org/Budgets/index.cfm>

Search terms: public works
<https://www.cherryhill-nj.com/DocumentCenter/View/5546>
<http://ehtgov.org/Budgets/2017%20Budget.pdf>

Population

43,504 population EHT
71,352 population Cherry Hill - this suggestions the EHT public works dept funding is equivalent to Cherry Hill

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egg_Harbor_Township,_New_Jersey

2018 Snow Removal Research and Results

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cherry_Hill,_New_Jersey

Snow Removal Process In Cherry Hill

As soon as there is snow accumulation the secondary streets start getting plowed. The trucks tend to run every few hours during a storm. So the plow is NOT moving massive snow at any given instant. Makes sense from a liability perspective. At the end of the storm a large plow truck with sand / salt mixture makes a final pass. I can't imagine a plow going through a neighborhood with 12 or even 6 inches of snow flying as the EHT process suggests.

I suspect that no workers can call out in Cherry Hill during a snow emergency. I also suspect as condition of employment they are not permitted to work outside their township job during their expected work shifts. I also suspect it is enforced because the streets are always plowed using the above process. They are probably considered emergency personnel.

How To Proceed

It is important to not spread false information, make broad statements to stop discourse, and or deflect from the issue.

A resident's car trip through various EHT neighborhoods suggests that none of the secondary streets were plowed, it is not just us.

I guess there are 2 alternatives, do nothing and only take care of our community or get involved and help our neighbors.

I still think we should send EHT a bill for the last snow event. Sending a bill will ping other parts of the EHT government (accounting and legal) and it may yield a positive result. If there is no progress, next year we should send a bill again, but also contact the media. In year three we send a bill again but then file a complaint with the State and or Feds.

The population growth rate of EHT is significant and it is possible that the government staff have not caught up with what is happening. They are operating in modes that were okay 10-20 years ago. People are moving here and who knows why. The Federal Government has a major high tech facility in EHT, and Stockton with the Feds is trying to start a high tech industrial park in EHT all while Atlantic City is trying to find itself. So the way EHT behaves will have an impact on the success of the high tech push and the local economy. I don't have much hope for large companies locating here, but you never know. If they consider this location they will turn over all the rocks and find out everything about the community including possible odd behavior associated with snow removal.

2018 Snow Removal Research and Results

Thanks for your research and comments. They're quite informative. There are some other things to consider. I couldn't find figures for how many miles of roads each township has, but I did see that we are just about three times larger in area. Clearly, Cherry Hill is much more densely populated. I don't know how those facts influence plowing.

I see that you Cc'd other trustees. Jeannie was away, but I'm including her in this response and intend to discuss your comments during the board's next work session.

Hello,

300 miles EHT source their website, Correction 297 miles but 206 miles is maintained by EHT and the rest (91) maintained by state and county source Wikipedia link

308 miles Cherry Hill but 247 miles is maintained by Cherry Hill and the rest (58) by state and county source Wikipedia link

Both towns collect trash every single day. During a snow event Cherry Hill trash collection may fall behind.

I suspect the same people who collect trash also do snow removal, not sure.

In a snow emergency I don't know what powers the state has to call on municipal resources and redirect them.

If you google Trenton and snow plowing problems you will find serious issues in Trenton. It looks like they privatized the function last year to try and solve their problem. So if that thread is pulled we might start to see a broader picture of compromised systems and communities.

Not sure if the EHT staff was fully working with some over time during the last snow event. My guess is no because they clearly state they do not start until the storm is over. Same statement was made by Trenton. So if people are not working for EHT at that time then I doubt if they are home watching TV. Contract snow removal is very lucrative for those that have the credentials. Don't know the facts, need to pull time card records.

This is why I think we should just send in bills. It will make a document trail for others to follow. The more detailed the bills the better. The purpose is to notify EHT accounting and legal, we don't care about reimbursement.

The following are some suggestions when contacting EHT.

Questions for EHT concerning the Snow Event 1/4/2017

2018 Snow Removal Research and Results

1. What is the snow removal budget?
2. How many plow and salting trucks are owned?
3. How many plow and salting trucks are leased and when are the leases activated?
4. Are the snow removal staff EHT government employees, contractors, or both?
5. If the staff includes contractors, were they available for the snow event or the rates change preventing effective response?
6. Were all the resources deployed for the snow event, if not why not and what percent of resources were not deployed?
7. Where were the resources deployed in detail by street / neighborhood / development?
8. Is the salt / sand owned and stockpiled by the town or is this a county or state resource?
10. Was any equipment, personnel, sand, salt and other resources deployed outside of EHT?
11. If resources were deployed outside of EHT was the primary consideration safety or financial gain?
12. If resources were deployed outside of EHT was there financial gain either on the part of EHT or any related contractors?

Some background

Budget

I suspect that the town needs to ensure it has a reasonable snow removal budget to protect it from catastrophic liability issues. Someone did an analysis somewhere and there is a number. We may think the budget is too small but at this point we don't know until the above questions are answered.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egg_Harbor_Township,_New_Jersey
<http://www.ehtgov.org/Budgets/2017%20Budget.pdf>

Management

When we lived in Florida, Florida Power suddenly decided to sell power to northern cities during

2018 Snow Removal Research and Results

a cold spell at rates higher than Florida residents. As a result the residents experienced rolling blackouts lasting from 3-6 hours as temperatures plunged into the 20's (Saint Petersburg) for more than 2 weeks. During these times the executives received additional bonuses. Yes, this is similar to what Enron did to California. This was disclosed in the press. Nothing happened and the practice continued in future years in Florida.

Not sure what EHT may be doing but it is clear that EHT is no longer a small town outside the visibility of the residents and nonresidents.

Observations

Hearsay, anecdotes, school budgets, and stories of conditions of the past are irrelevant. All that matters is what is the budget and how were the resources applied. If we find there was no budget, highly unlikely, then that is a different challenge.

How to proceed

We can talk to the politicians and the EHT employees but what must happen is a bill must be prepared and officially sent to the township from our lawyer. It must then be read into the township record. All that matters is providing Documented Evidence of the costs and the townships liability. It is irrelevant what the county decided or how the town handles this. The only thing that matters is that there is Document Evidence (I can't stress that enough) of the costs.

I keep using that phrase / term "Documented Evidence". It is a critical term in matters when dealing with the government.

In year 2 we contact the media and provide the documented evidence. In year 3 it becomes a lawsuit or perhaps a government (State or even Fed) investigation that will look at all Documented Evidence.

There were the best of intentions when we paid to have the streets plowed but who assumes the legal liability if something should happen?

We really don't know what is going on and we need to be very cautious and proceed properly.

There are no buddies here, this is the government with serious outcomes, and documented evidence everywhere.