



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR EMANUEL OFFICIALLY LAUNCHES CHICAGOSHVELS.ORG FOR THE WINTER SEASON**

*Interactive Website Boasts New Features for This Winter, Including Mobile Capabilities for The Popular "Plow Tracker" and Regular Updates on Snow Plow Progress Over Social Media*

As Chicagoans prepare for tonight's snowfall, Mayor Rahm Emanuel today officially launched [ChicagoShovels.org](http://ChicagoShovels.org) for the winter season, complete with new features to help people get the information they need more quickly: the popular real-time "Plow Tracker" is optimized for mobile devices for the first time, so that Chicagoans can use the website on a smartphone while on the go to see where Chicago's snow plows are at any given time. Additionally, the City will provide regular updates on the progress of its snowplow program during snowstorms through the Mayor's Office Twitter account: [@ChicagosMayor](https://twitter.com/ChicagosMayor).

"Winter preparedness is everyone's responsibility, and we are leveraging technology to get Chicagoans the tools and support they need, when they need it, and now, right at their fingertips," said Mayor Emanuel. "Providing Chicagoans with the opportunity to effectively use Plow Tracker on their mobile devices and giving regular updates on our snowplow progress allows them to stay informed during severe weather."

In addition to enhancing the real-time "Plow Tracker" and committing to providing regular updates on the snowplow program during snowstorms via Twitter, the City is also working to enhance its innovative "Adopt-A-Sidewalk" initiative, which helps Chicagoans connect with their neighbors to lend a hand to those in need across the city. Partnering with Code for America and the Smart Chicago Collaborative, the "Adopt-A-Sidewalk" web application that allows neighbors to connect online now allows civic web developers to make common-sense improvements to make it even more useful for people across the city to connect with each other. Chicago has also joined Code for America's [Race for Reuse](#) initiative to encourage adoption in other cities.

By simply going to [ChicagoShovels.org](http://ChicagoShovels.org), Chicagoans can access:

- **"Adopt-a-Sidewalk:"** This web application allows neighbors to connect with each other to help shovel sidewalks and offers a platform for sharing resources. Neighbors "adopt-a-sidewalk" near their home by "claiming" it on an interactive map and will be able to see at-

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a-glance which sidewalks are claimed and have the option to connect with their neighbors to help keep their sidewalks clear. [Here's a video that shows how "Adopt-a-Sidewalk" works.](#)

- **Real-time Snow Plow Tracker:** During major snow cleanup efforts, the City will activate the real-time Plow Tracker map, allowing the public to see the locations of snow plows. This tool will be activated during snow events and is part of City efforts to improve public transparency around City services.
- **Volunteer "Snow Corps":** Chicago Snow Corps is a new program that connects volunteers with residents in need of snow removal – such as seniors and residents with disabilities. Groups and individuals can volunteer to help those in need by signing up online to be connected to nearby shoveling requests from the Department of Family and Support Services and the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. People who would like to request help can call 3-1-1.
- **New Winter Readiness Apps:** Chicago web and app developers have leveraged Chicago open data to build apps that help people better navigate Chicago this winter. [Twoinch.es](#) informs and alerts drivers of winter parking bans. WasMyCarTowed.com uses the City's towed and relocated vehicle data to help people locate their towed vehicles. Other apps were developed as part of the AppsforMetro Chicago contest.
- **City Resource Links:** The public is one click away from submitting an online 311 request, viewing related press releases, finding answers to frequently asked questions, signing up for Notify Chicago alerts, watching educational videos and following the Mayor's Office on Twitter.

The City's Snow Command, run through the Department of Streets and Sanitation (DSS) will be carefully monitoring weather forecasts and data, the incoming weather system and our roadways during the overnight and early morning hours. Snow Trucks have been preloaded with salt, and drivers are ready to be deployed as necessary.

City officials are also reminding Chicagoans that by ordinance they are responsible for keeping the sidewalks near their property clean of snow and ice. In addition to online access to winter-related City services through ChicagoShovels.org, residents can also find additional information and make requests for services through 311, the City's service call center.

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