

Somerset County Council is responsible for highway winter service in Somerset except for the M5, A303 and A36. The service is delivered on 21% of roads, as described below and shown on the map, through contract arrangements with Atkins. We work together as Somerset Highways.

What is road salting?

Road salting is carried out in order to assist the safe movement of highway users in conditions of snow and ice. Resources are not available to treat all roads. However, priority networks have been defined, based on traffic flows and strategic significance (see below).

In order that de-icing salt does not have to be transported large distances in winter weather, it is stored in strategic locations around the County.

In some parishes salt bins are located at key points to encourage self-help. We provide salt in these locations on the understanding that it is used for highway purposes.

Criteria have been developed to enable the pre salting network to be defined. This is required to ensure a consistent approach across the County and achieve a reasonable balance between cost and level of service. During 2010 a review of the pre salting network was carried out using the following criteria:-

1. Strategic and County Routes
2. Freight Routes
3. Links to Emergency Locations
4. Links to Adjoining Counties
5. Links to Major Settlements
6. Links to Settlements above 500 feet
7. Links to Urban/Rural Schools (Major)

When are roads salted?

Daily forecasts with temperature graphs are received to predict road surface temperatures at the weather stations in Somerset. If the air is dry, frost will not form, even though the temperature may be well below freezing point.

For this reason it is important to predict both road temperatures and air moisture content. Experienced staff interpret all the information and issue instructions to salt as necessary. Instructions may vary in different parts of the County.

Normally precautionary salting is carried out during the early evening or early morning. Frost does not normally affect the road surface until the early morning and precautionary salting is intended to prevent this.

If frost follows rain in the early hours or freezing occurs unexpectedly, insufficient time will be available to salt the whole of the priority network before motorists start their morning journeys. Therefore, motorists should not assume the routes are salted and must drive with due caution.

What we can do

- ❄ Undertake precautionary salting on the pre-salting network when there is a risk of ice or snow.
- ❄ Clear the routes of snow accumulation in priority order.
- ❄ Keep the public informed through the media.

What we can't do

- ❄ Undertake work on the Motorway or Trunk Roads, as these are the responsibility of the Highways Agency.
- ❄ Salt all highways.
- ❄ Keep roads free of ice and snow all of the time.

What you can do

- ❄ Prepare your vehicle for winter.
- ❄ Check the weather forecast and road conditions before travelling.
- ❄ Allow extra time for your journey.
- ❄ Give gritters and snow ploughs plenty of room to operate.
- ❄ Carry a shovel and blanket in your vehicle.

Can I clear snow myself?

The Council does not wish to discourage householders from acting as good citizens in clearing snow from pavements in front of their houses because of fears as to what their legal liability might be. If you use your common sense and take reasonable care to see that you do not create a new and worse risk (eg by pouring boiling water which then freezes and someone then slips) you should have nothing to be afraid of. The only person at risk is someone who does things so badly that they are worse than when they started.

Remember...

- Only the busiest roads are salted, most are not - drive safely.
- In icy conditions braking distances can increase tenfold.
- It takes time for salt to become effective.
- Rain can wash salt off roads.
- In very low temperatures even salting does not prevent icing.
- Extra caution is needed when driving in bad weather.

More information can be found at www.somerset.gov.uk/winterservice

Email: RoadsandTransportSD@somerset.gov.uk Telephone: 0845 345 9155
Fax: 01823 356936

Write:

Mendip Area Highways Office Wells Road, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9AS	Taunton Deane Area Highways Office Burton Place, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4HE
South Somerset Area Highways Office Mead Avenue, Houndstone Business Park, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 8RT	West Somerset Area Highways Office Mart Road Industrial Estate, Minehead TA24 5BJ
Sedgemoor Area Highways Office Dunball Industrial Estate, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 4TP	



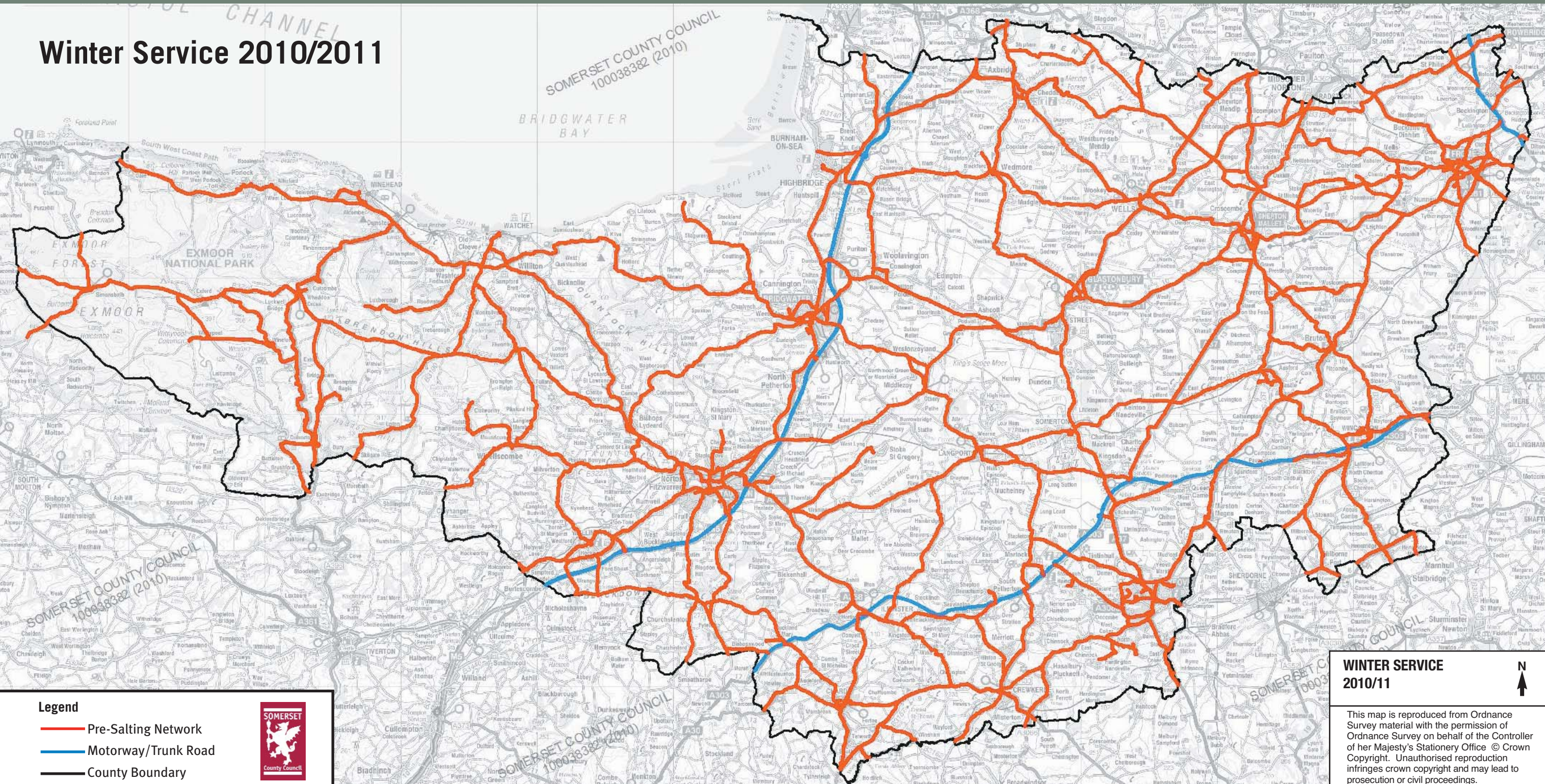
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Your Guide to Winter Service in Somerset 2010/2011

WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK

Winter Service 2010/2011



- Legend**
- Pre-Salting Network
 - Motorway/Trunk Road
 - County Boundary



WINTER SERVICE 2010/11



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