

# Montcalm County won't plow roads as frequently this winter

■ *Falling revenues impact winter road care locally*

**BY SHELLY STRAUTZ**

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**STANTON** — While area residents endure the area's first winter storm, they also should brace for changes in the plowing and clearing of local roadways.

Due to falling income from the state's fuel tax, the Road Commission for Montcalm County is experiencing a funding deficit for the third year in a row. In an effort to make ends meet, the commission board recently approved a revised snow policy that calls for less frequent plowing of local roads.

"We just had to do something," Dale Linton, chairman of the road commission board, said of the "challenging" financial circumstances the board is dealing with. "We just can't run unlimited overtime and with the fuel costs and maintenance costs we had to cut back.

"We haven't done anything that people

can't get out and move," he said. "It's just not going to be quite as convenient as in the past."

The new policy states that "due to declining revenues, increased costs, especially fuel, and related budget limitations it was determined that road commission crews will not work overtime (after regular hours or on week-ends) on county local (township) roads or in subdivisions unless at least five inches of snow has fallen."

Road commission employees will, however, work overtime clearing local roads "in cases of freezing rain or extreme drifting of snow."

Linton and Road Commission Managing Director Randy Stearns said the clearing of state trunk lines such as M-46, M-57, M- 66, M- 91 and U. S. 131 as well

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Daily News/Greg De Kraker

**Twelve- year-old Gabe Morales dumps ashovelful as he scoops snow from the driveway of his Greenville home Friday afternoon.**