

## **Road Commission “Pumpkin Parade” preps for winter’s worst**

**Flint, Michigan. ---**

The Genesee County Road Commission will be conducting its annual final inspection of winter maintenance equipment at its Oakley Street headquarters on Thursday, November 6th. Dubbed the “Pumpkin Parade” because the long line of cleaned and polished orange snow plows and salt trucks entering the facility bears a striking resemblance to a parade of pumpkins, this final inspection is only the most visible of the many activities the Road Commission conducts to ensure its trucks and its troops are ready for anything that the fast approaching winter can dish out.

According to Maintenance Director Anthony Branch, “this is the end of the preparation process, not the beginning. Each piece of equipment in the ‘parade’ has already had any routine maintenance items taken care of, has been through its inspections and should be ready to fight a storm. These vehicles are here for final inspection. We go over them one more time to make sure they are all in ‘fighting shape’ and ready to battle the elements.”

While the trucks are being inspected, the drivers are getting last minute instructions and updates on any new equipment and procedures, often directly from the manufacturers. “Our equipment operators are seasoned veterans with a lot of winters under their belts. But the equipment changes as new models with new capabilities come online, and procedures are updated accordingly. And of course it has been 7 months since we’ve dealt with snow and ice. So we take this opportunity to go over everything with them one more time, and the manufacturer reps are here to demonstrate and explain any changes in the equipment or their operating characteristics. Winter maintenance - snow and ice removal- is a hostile, dangerous environment, and we want to be sure that our operators and our equipment are as prepared as possible.”

For photos and video of the “Pumpkin Parade”, or to get the Road Commission’s winter maintenance policy and a host of tips, tricks, reminders and resources for safely coping with winter weather and winter driving, visit the Road Commission’s website at [www.gcrc.org](http://www.gcrc.org).