



2011 BLIZZARD

February 1 – 2, 2011



HISTORICAL



- On February 1 and 2, the City of Evanston experienced the third largest blizzard recorded to date.
- By month end the City will have broken the record for the snowiest February dating back to when accumulation statistics were first recorded.
- Streets crews were supplemented by workers from Sanitation, Forestry, Parks, Parking and Utilities to assist in the massive clean-up effort.
- The effort included clearing streets, city parking lots, city sidewalks and for the first time alleyways. In addition, contractors were called in to assist with hauling snow from the major retail and business districts areas of the city.



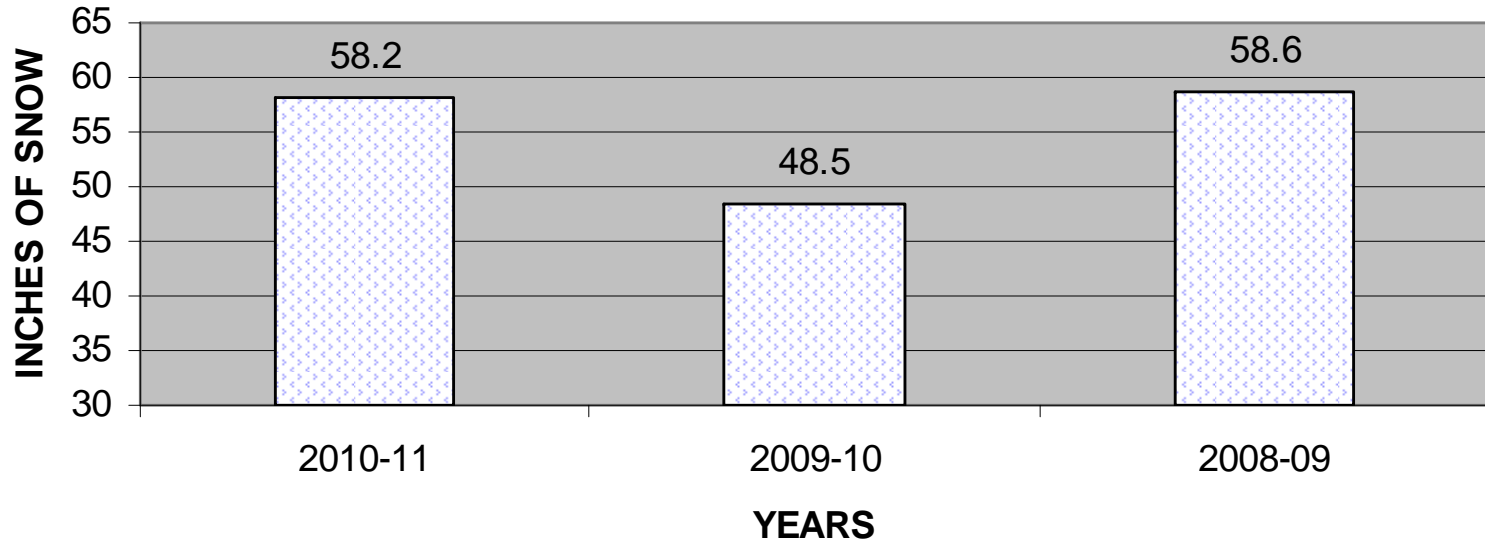
HISTORICAL COST COMPARISON

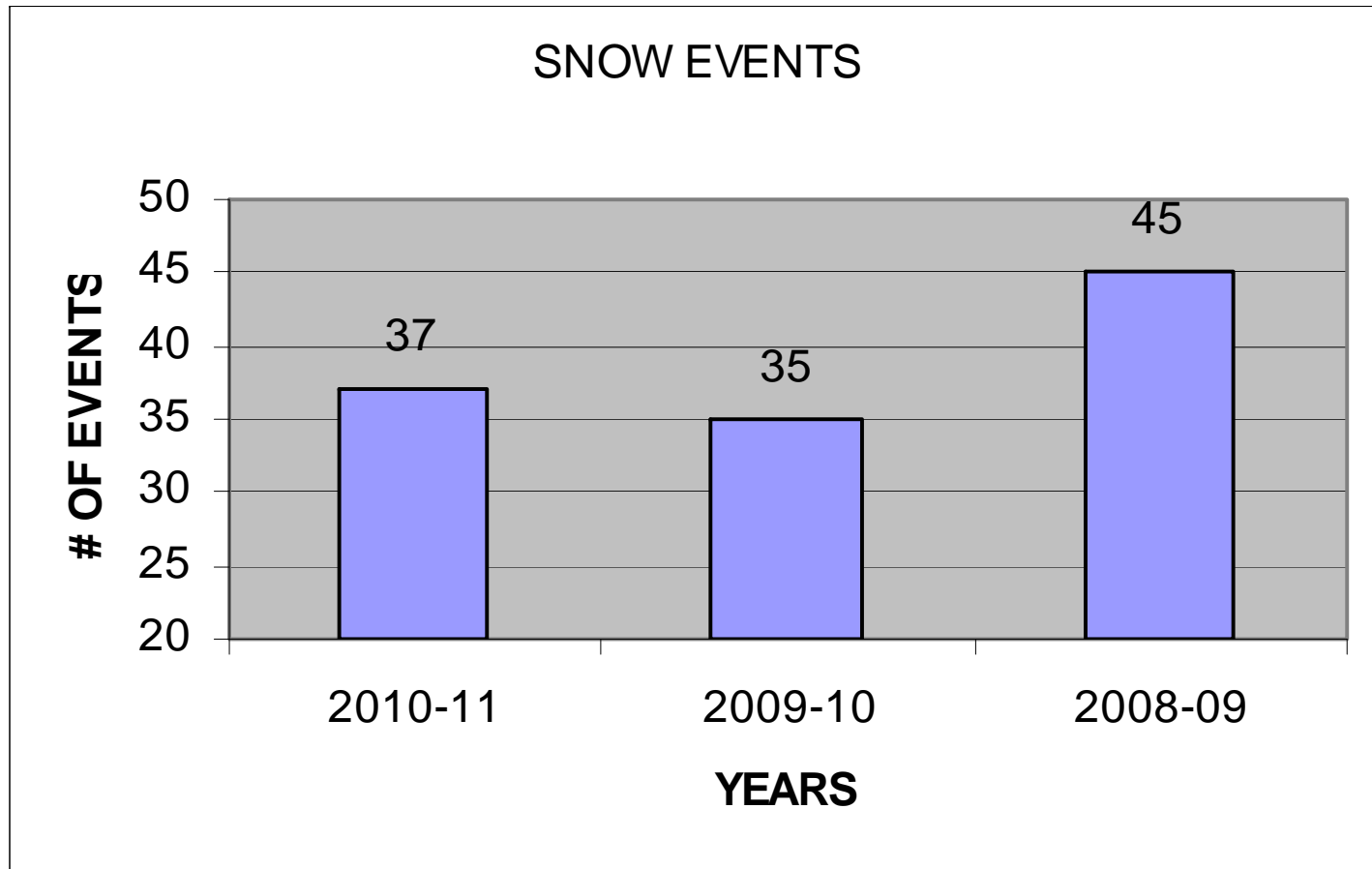


Snow Operations Cost Comparisons				
	Blizzard 2011	FY 2010/2011	FY 2009/2010	FY 2008/2009
OT (personnel)	\$271,462	\$411,254	\$303,907	\$565,887
Material (salt)	\$39,543	\$254,518	\$424,895	\$642,419
Equip. Rental	\$85,264	\$113,098	\$0	\$139,610
Equip. Purchases	\$2,176	\$2,198	\$0	\$0
Towing	\$69,120	\$75,120	\$48,080	\$110,070
OT (support) *	\$12,669	\$12,669	\$0	\$0
Mis costs*	\$59,086	\$59,086	\$55	\$814
TOTAL	\$539,320	\$927,943	\$776,937	\$1,458,800



THREE YEAR SNOW FALL HISTORY







HISTORICAL



- The cost of snow removal operations is directly tied to the number and type of snow and ice events.
- For example the personnel and material costs required for 0.5 inches of freezing rain can be more than that which is required for 4.0 inches of snow.
- The number of events can drive snow removal cost up faster than the quantity of inches of snowfall.
- In FY 2008/2009 there were more snow events that required a higher than the “normal” \$250,000 in personnel overtime costs and the “normal” salt costs of \$175,000.
- As a result of the last three years of higher than average snow and ice totals and events, staff established a new “normal” of roughly \$325,000 for personnel overtime and \$400,000 for salt.
- Since the Blizzard of 2011 did not require the use of a significant amount of salt, staff revised “normal” projections minimized the impact to City’s budget.



COMMUNICATONS



- Unlike snow events in the past the City took a very aggressive approach to communications. Teleconferencing – News updates for Alderman and Press conducted daily during the event with a total of 6 updates
- Social Networks
 - Twitter – 99 tweets related to blizzard
 - Facebook posts – 32
- Web
 - 3 to 4 updates for the first three days
 - 1 to 2 updates for next four days
 - Email account set up for follow up comments.
- Mass Notification – three mass notifications which significantly extended outreach to the community.
- Videos – Suzette Robinson provided video updates which were posted on our Youtube account.



COMPLAINTS/COMPLIMENTS



- The City does not staff up to cover events of this nature, and implements varying procedures and action plans to provide services as quickly and efficiently as possible. Because of our increased ability in communications, we received many requests for service and comments during the event and after the event as a part of our assessment process. Below is a brief summary of requests for service/complaints, compliments and comments regarding services during the event, and during cleanup operations:
- Residential streets –
 - first pass plowing
 - second pass/curb to curb plowing
 - Odd/Even schedule
 - keep it up until all the streets are clear
 - confusion over timing of plowing
 - enforce parking fines/towing



COMPLAINTS/COMPLIMENTS



- Parking Lot clearance
 - CTA/Metra
 - business surface lots
- Sidewalk clearance
 - Public area
 - Business area
 - Residential areas (multi-unit and street corners)
- Plowed in vehicles and driveways
- Alleys
- Awareness of special needs (wheelchair access, seniors, special needs children etc.)
- Priority of plowing – parks plowed before streets, parking lots not cleared in time for commuters, fire hydrants not cleared



LESSONS LEARNED



- Communications – This was a major part of our success for this event. The City could not hope to clear this level of snow within normal time frames and therefore communications is even more critical than normal. The lesson learned is that we did put a priority on communications, but we can still improve our efforts to communicate changes in procedures necessitated by changing events.
- Parking flexibility
 - Usage of parking decks to get cars off the street
 - Relaxed parking meter enforcement
 - Using school lots
- Modification of even/odd parking/tow procedures for blizzard level
 - Consider a three tiered approach
 - Normal snow fall
 - Over 4 inches
 - Over 12 inches



LESSONS LEARNED



- Partnerships
 - With Northwestern, School Districts, area businesses, and property owners
 - Within departments – Parks Recreation and Community Services, Water/Sewer, Parking, Community and Economic Development and Police all worked well together.
 - Utilization of vendors for snow hauling from the business districts and for snow shoveling on sidewalks throughout the City.
- Priorities and Consistency
 - Residential side street plowing
 - Smaller equipment resources were not sufficient
 - Extended time period for parking ban needs to be communicated more clearly.
 - Quicker response on re-tasking staff
 - Assess plowing/removal needs (streets, sidewalks, parks, parking lots)
 - Re-assign staff to meet needs.
- Compare operations to other communities
 - A few comments noted our operations better than others and vice versa.
 - Shared resources – Equipment types, techniques, etc.