

1. How do we prioritize work and determine how much to spend on the various tasks of turf maintenance, horticulture maintenance, snow removal and others?

The number one priority of the University of Vermont's Grounds Department is safety. Aesthetics follows not far behind. Thus, snow removal is always at the top of our list because it correlates with both safety and aesthetics. We will spend all that we must to remove snow to create a safe, aesthetically pleasing atmosphere.

2. How do we schedule work around other campus events and activities such as outdoor classes, picnics, and admissions tours?

We are in constant communication with Conference & Events (CAES), Admissions, The President's Office and all other groups responsible for scheduling campus events. There are software programs in place to assist in these areas. First we use Famis, which is our Work Order scheduling system. We also use Resource-25 (R-25) to schedule events on campus.

3. Are we involved in the decision making process for landscaping around new buildings? Who determines what to plant and how much funding is dedicated to the landscape?

Outside architectural and engineering firms (A&E) plan landscape design for new projects. Our Grounds Department is also brought in by Facilities Design & Construction and Campus Planning Services in the early stages to review and comment on pre-construction plans. It is then where we can comment on any issues we find relevant and make sure campus standards are followed. Landscape funding is most typically the last item in a project budget so when funds

need to be cut, unfortunately this is where it tends to be. If a project comes up short in its budget, it can move forward without some of the landscape, however, you can't build a building without a roof, for example.

5. When are outdoor spaces available for use in the spring? When are grounds conditions acceptable?

Ground conditions and the weather determine when campus areas are acceptable for outdoor events. Examples of situations that slow down the process are colder than average temperatures, late season snowfalls and spring moisture.

6. Who determines where sidewalks are placed? How is percentage of green space managed?

Sidewalk placement is typically part of the overall design with new projects and is part of the site package. However, because the campus is so old, it has developed a "piece meal" fashion, which means the traffic plans are always a challenge. The approach to putting in any new sidewalks is to let people create their own paths and then install a hard sidewalk. The green space is managed through the University Campus Planning and Burlington Planning Offices.

7. Who determines when we are called in for snow removal during the winter season and how do we determine how much and what types of deicing materials to use? When do we plow and when do we salt?

Police Services determine when we are called for snow removal because they are on campus 24 hours a day. Then notify the Central Heating Plant who then calls the Grounds Manager. During steady snows we continuously plow and only salt (Magic Salt) until the storm slows. If no plowing is needed we will only apply salt to avoid freezing conditions.

8. How do we prioritize the areas needing attention for Commencement and how do we get the work done in such a small window of time in the spring?

High profile, highly visible areas are concentrated on first. Contractors are normally brought in to help with spring cleanup for about a month with specific areas to clean up. The same contractors have been used for the past few years to ensure they know the areas well and understand what is expected of them.

9. How do we decide when to bring contractors in to assist us with our work?

Landscape work is very weather dependent so there are many fluctuations throughout the year regarding the workload and numbers of people needed to perform the work. Contractors are used most often during the winter to plow snow in most of the larger lots and also in the spring to help with clean up of the grounds.

10. Who determines the use of the campus landscape, for example mowed turf grass vs. meadow grass, formal gardens vs. natural gardens?

The firm that is awarded the contract to the land designs landscape areas. There are several campus committees that evaluate and approve these designs. Since UVM is an older campus we have inherited many of the designs from the past and are restricted by lack of funding to renovate or change many of them without large amounts of money either through new capital or deferred maintenance projects.



University of Vermont Ground Department maintains and manages outside spaces on the University campus. Some of the areas we maintain are:

- Sidewalks
- Green space
- Roads, parking lots, storm water drains
- Mowing, aesthetic maintenance
- Pest management
- Snow removal and salting

STARS (Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System) is a program developed by AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education) which allows schools to be able to self-track how sustainable they are. The program has many aspects that allocate credits and the more credits the school receives, the more sustainable they are. One of the credits categories is “grounds”. The STARS program has 3.25 credits available in this section.

UVM has received the following points:
Tier one: Integrated Pest Management: 1.31/2.0
Tier two: 1.25 (divided into the following)

- Native plants: 0.25/0.25
- Wildlife habitat: 0.25/0.25
- Tree Campus USA: 0/0.25
- Snow & Ice Removal: 0.25/0.25
- Compost: 0.25/0.25



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**Grounds
Department:
Frequently Asked
Questions**