

To: Chris Ross, Councillor  
From: Matthew Goudy, CAO  
Date: February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Reference: 11/154/2019-134**

## RE: Council Query – Extension Cords

Thank you for your inquiry about extension cords across sidewalks.

The need for drivers to start their cars in frigid weather must be balanced with the need for public safety via unobstructed walkways.

Section 404 of the City's [Traffic Bylaw #223](#) states: "No person shall place, or permit to be placed an electrical extension cord across a sidewalk or driveway whereby any person, animal, or vehicle may be in any way injured or damaged."

Electrical extension cords are restricted from placement across public sidewalks or driveways because they can create dangerous trip hazards.

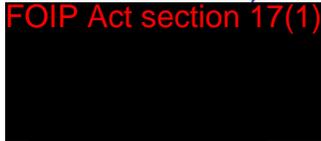
When there is a need to plug in a vehicles or trailers, the bylaw requires that the extension cord is suspended 8 feet (2.4 metres) above the sidewalk. This requirement is in effect all year round. I recognize that trends have changed since the introduction of Bylaw 223, more than 20 years ago. Today, many people only plug in their vehicle during the most extreme cold spells of the year – a time when pedestrian traffic is also greatly reduced.

Each year after the winter season, there is an annual review of the snow clearing practices. Should you desire, this would be an ideal time to review how extension cords are addressed when the weather drops to extremely low temperatures. Council may want to consider easing the restrictions during extreme cold weather snaps of -30 degrees Celsius or below.

I hope this satisfies your inquiry – please feel free to email or call me if you'd like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

FOIP Act section 17(1)



Matthew Goudy, P.Eng  
Chief Administrative Officer