

## HALACHARAM – SNOW

**Snow On Shabbos** – Contrary to popular belief, according to most halachic authorities, snow is not muktzeh.

However, just because snow is not muktzeh does not mean that there are no Shabbos restrictions relating to snow. The poskim point out that it is prohibited to make a **snowball** or snowman/snow-woman on Shabbos for a variety of reasons, including the melacha of boneh (building) [just as the Talmud states that cheese making is prohibited on Shabbos as a form of boneh – apparently the Shabbos restriction of boneh has a broader definition than the colloquial understanding].

As for **shoveling snow**, many poskim believe that if it can be avoided until after Shabbos, shoveling should be avoided on Shabbos because it requires excessive exertion and is therefore rabbinically prohibited as *uvda d'chol* [literally, a weekday activity]. If the snow has turned into ice, the poskim point out that another Shabbos violation may be involved – *soser* (destroying).

Because shoveling snow probably only involves a concern of *uvda d'chol*, most authorities allow a gentile to be hired to remove the snow. In addition, if there is a concern that people will be injured (*e.g.*, near public places like shuls), the snow may be shoveled as well. One can kick the snow away to make a path, and for those who are especially snow-conscious, there is room to be lenient to shovel a small path to have access to the street if a gentile is not available to shovel. Finally, spreading salt on ice/snow is permitted on Shabbos.