

Smart Salting

It is getting colder outside, which means snow and ice are on the way. Keeping our sidewalk, driveways, and roads clear often means reaching for the shovel and deicing salt.

Although salt is effective at cleaning snow and ice, it is a permanent pollution that impacts our water resources. When snow and ice melts, the runoff carries the salt to wetlands, lakes, streams and ponds.

Did you know it only takes one teaspoon of salt in five gallons of water to exceed water quality standards for chloride and create harmful conditions for freshwater fish, insects, and plants? As there is no economically feasible way to remove chloride from water, preventing chloride contamination is critical. Chloride from deicing is one of the largest contributors to a growing salty water problem in Minnesota. It is also important to properly store and cover deicing salt when not being used. Proper storage techniques help protect salt from entering the stormwater and nature's elements.



5 Tips to be “salt smart”.

- **Shovel first.** Clear all snow from driveway and sidewalks before it turns to ice. Salt should only be used after the snow is removed and only in areas needed for safety.
- **Size up.** More salt does not mean more melting. A 12-ounce coffee mug of salt should be enough for a 20-ft driveway or about 10 sidewalk squares.
- **Spread.** Distribute salt evenly, not in clumps.
- **Sweep.** If you see leftover salt on the ground after the ice melts, then you’ve used too much! Sweep up and collect leftover salt to keep it out of our rivers and streams.
- **Switch.** Rock salt stops working if the temperature is below 15 degrees. When temperatures drop that low, switch to sand for traction or choose a different deicer formulated for colder temperatures.

Preventing pollution of Stormwater is everyone’s responsibility!



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