

To Salt or Not to Salt...

Salt is a main ingredient in many winter deicing products that are frequently used to help melt snow and ice. Unfortunately, salt does not break down and go away. It moves with melt water and flows into our lakes, streams, wetlands, and groundwater where it accumulates and permanently pollutes our water!



Deicers impair our drinking water, endanger wildlife, degrade infrastructure, damage vegetation, and even harm our pets.



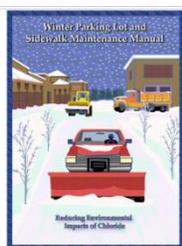
Shovel first! Shovel early and often in the storm to reduce the need for deicers. This can prevent snow from becoming compacted and more difficult to clear. It also allows the sun to penetrate to the pavement surface and melt any remaining snow and ice. You may find that there is no need to apply deicer.

Use deicers sparingly *after* shoveling. If it is necessary to use salt, after shoveling, scatter the salt so there is space between the grains. Only 1-4 pounds of salt per 1,000 feet is needed to melt residual ice. A coffee mug of salt can sufficiently treat your driveway. More salt does not equal better melting.



Avoid using salt when temperatures are below 15°F. Salt is less effective and works slower when pavement temperatures are below 15°F. There are other products that may work at colder temperatures, but they likely negatively impact the lakes and rivers too. For really cold temperatures, use sand or other abrasives such as cherry stone to provide traction.

Sweep up excess deicers and abrasives. When the snow and ice are gone, clean up the pavement. Prevent leftover materials from washing away with the melting snow.



Hire certified winter maintenance professionals. If you hire someone to maintain your property, find someone trained in best practices.