

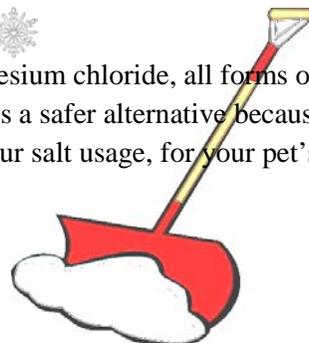


## SMART SALTING TIPS FOR USING ROAD SALT WISELY AT HOME

Many of our local streams suffer the effects of too much salt. Road salt (sodium chloride) is most commonly used to remove ice from roads, parking lots and sidewalks. As snow and ice melt, road salt is carried into our lakes, streams and wetlands, where just one teaspoon can permanently pollute five gallons of water. Chloride from road salt is a major threat to water quality in northeast Ohio and other areas of the country where road de-icing occurs. Since chloride is not easily filtered from water in the natural environment, it builds up over time in the soil and in shallow groundwater. And, since these shallow groundwater tables are the source of stream water during dry weather, chloride levels in streams can remain elevated throughout the year – even in summer! Because most water quality control practices – detention basins, bio-retention cells, etc. – don't permanently remove salt or chloride from runoff, it is extremely important to control salt at the source by being strategic about when, where and how salt is applied.



- \* **Shovel Snow:** Removing snow and ice during a snowstorm reduces the amount of salt required for deicing and increases the efficiency of deicing operations. The more snow removed manually during a snowstorm lessens the salt or chemical deicer needed and it will be more effective.
- \* **Follow Salt Application Directions:** Adding more salt than is recommended won't speed up melting. Instead it is carried to waterways when the ice does melt. For best results follow label directions (1 cup per sq. yd.) and spread salt out a few inches apart.
- \* **Reduce Chemical Application:** Only apply salt or chemical deicer where you really need it. For example, you may not require access to every door into your house but only the front door. Create a path by shoveling snow to the front door and then apply the correct amount of salt or chemical deicer.
- \* **Consider Temperature:** Most road salts are ineffective below 15°F, so do not waste your time applying salt when it will not help melt the ice! Sand can be coupled with salt for better traction but must be swept up after use. Sediment is another major pollutant of our stormwater!
- \* **Sweep Up Extra Road Salt:** Excess salt does not help melt ice! If the ice is gone but there is still salt on your driveway, sweep it up.
- \* **Pet Safety:** Sodium chloride, calcium chloride, and magnesium chloride, all forms of deicing "salt" can burn the paws of your pets. Potassium acetate is a safer alternative because it contains no chlorides, though it can be difficult to find. Reduce your salt usage, for your pet's sake, and wash their paws after walking.



(Information used in this document was found on the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District website.)