

Put your property on a low sodium diet

Road salt (sodium chloride) helps keep roads, walkways and parking lots clear of ice and snow during the winter. It's one of the most common winter maintenance tools, but unfortunately excess use damages buildings and equipment, costs your business money and harms the environment. Using road salt sparingly alongside other winter maintenance products and practices can help reduce your maintenance costs, protect your property and water quality.

Salting our roads, salting our streams

Road salt has a lower freezing point than water. When applied to asphalt during a snow event, it creates a brine that prevents freezing and melts snow. But road salt is generally effective only down to -10° C regardless of how much you apply. And while it dissolves, it doesn't disappear. Salt and brine flows with runoff into our storm sewers and eventually into our freshwater lakes and streams. High concentrations of salt are toxic for freshwater species, like turtles, salamanders and fish, and can kill eggs and larvae causing population declines.

What about eco-alternatives?

You'll find several (pricier) alternatives on the market labelled "eco-friendly", such as beet juice deicer. And while most ice-melt alternatives contain less sodium chloride than conventional road salt, they still end up in our waterways and are potentially harmful to aquatic species. Simply using less road salt alongside other maintenance products and practices is still the best option.

Smart Salt Use

Use road salt sparingly in the right conditions and follow these practices for the best results:

- Ensure downspouts are directed away from walkways and high-traffic areas
- Grade parking lots toward drainage zones
- Clear as much snow and ice as you can before applying road salt
- Close off under-used walkways and parking lots
- Keep salt piles covered, contained and away from storm sewers
- Hire a [Smart About Salt contractor](#)

Why use less?

- Reduce conventional winter maintenance costs
- Protect buildings, vehicles and equipment from salt damage
- Protect plants, trees and shrubs on your property from damage
- Reduce chloride pollution of freshwater lakes, rivers, and streams
- Protect freshwater species

Road salt: just use less

Hire a Smart About Salt certified contractor to manage winter maintenance on your property by visiting <http://www.smartaboutsalt.com/sascontractors> and [consider joining these companies](#) in demonstrating your commitment to your community and the environment by having your site certified.

Resources

The Sustainable Technologies Evaluation Program

Procurement Guidance for Parking Lot Snow and Ice Management Version 2.0

<https://sustainabletechnologies.ca/app/uploads/2019/06/Procurement-Guidance-Parking-Lot-Snow-and-Ice-Mgmt.pdf>

Smart About Salt

www.smartaboutsalt.com