

Environmental Road Salting Proves Effective



Press Release

For Immediate Release: April 14, 2017

Naples, FL- A new study published in the Proceedings of the Natural Academy of the Sciences (Salting our freshwater lakes) purports to sound the alarm about rising chloride levels in North American lakes. The study actually found that chloride levels in the majority of the examined lakes either stayed the same or declined and that chloride levels were far below EPA toxicity standards. Chloride concentrations across all 371 lakes in the study had a median of 6 milligrams per liter, while the EPA

standard is 230 mg/L.

The fact is that several better studies have shown that when road salt is properly applied environmental impacts can be effectively managed and significantly minimized. Modern roadways themselves are not a natural feature of the environment and are specifically engineered to satisfy our demand for personal and commercial mobility – factors that are basic to the quality of life. This includes sensible salting when needed to protect lives and commerce.

For more than 30 years the Salt Institute has been a leader in promoting sensible salting, which consists of identifying those salt management practices intended to protect the environment and train winter maintenance professionals. The key concept is to use the right amount of salt at the right time and place to keep roadways safe and passable. This includes both the application and storage of road salt. <http://www.saltinstitute.org/publication/safe-and-sustainable-snowfighting/>

A recent comprehensive study by environmental researchers at the University of Waterloo and Environment Canada, examined whether the best practices as outlined in Canada's Road Salt Code of Practice actually delivered the improved environmental outcomes they promised. The answer was a resounding, yes; when best practices were implemented chloride levels were reduced by half. <http://www.saltinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Road-Using-Best-Road-Salt-Management-Practices-Waterloo-2010-1.pdf>

Another study by the Guelph University Research Review found that recycling stormwater runoff could reduce chloride peaks in streams without adversely affecting road safety. In cooperation with the City of Toronto, researchers used the EPA Storm Water Management Model to design a computer-controlled stormwater containment systems to serve as a guide for future mitigation applications. <http://www.saltinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Guelph-Stormwater-Management.pdf>

Salt is our most important winter resource, because it saves lives and protects the economy. It is economical and extremely effective. In fact the benefits of salting roads means that road salting pays for itself within 25 minutes of application. Road salting and plowing can reduce injury crashes by up to 85 percent. And clear roads allow ambulances and other emergency vehicles to perform their life saving services. <http://www.highways.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Brochure-FINAL-LoRes.pdf>

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The Salt Institute is a North American based non-profit trade association dedicated to advancing the many benefits of salt, particularly to ensure winter roadway safety, quality water and healthy nutrition.

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