Reduce your winter salt use!

- at **HOME** on walkways and driveways
- in the **COMMUNITY** on sidewalks and in parking lots

Keep pavement and sidewalks clear of ice and snow

- Shovel first to remove as much snow & ice as possible before applying salt.
- A little salt goes a long way. You only need to spread about 1-2 tbsp of salt for a 1 m square area - the size of a sidewalk slab.
- Use a smaller grain-size of salt.
- Spread evenly on icy areas only.
- Give the salt time to work before clearing.

Protect yourself from slips and falls and increase road safety

- Wear proper winter footwear designed for snow and ice.
- Add removable ice spikes to your boots for walking outdoors in icy conditions.
- Use a traction aid like sand on your walkway to increase traction.
- Drive according to conditions: install snow tires on your vehicle and drive at a slower speed to increase traction, lower your chances of winter accidents, and save you money through lower insurance premiums.

Prevent future icy buildups

- Redirect your downspouts away from walkways and driveways.
- Shovel and pile your snow to lower areas or onto lawns to direct melting snow away from paved areas.
- Only use road salt when conditions are appropriate; road salt does not work when the temperature is below -10 °C.

Get certified!

Contractors with Smart About Salt certification can lower costs by using less salt, have strengthened due-diligence liability defence against lawsuits, are protecting the environment, and have reduced road salt infrastructure damage on client's property!

smart about salt

It's time to go on a LOW (road) SALT DIET

and here are 5 reasons why!

1 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Chloride, a component of road salt, is toxic to many species of aquatic wildlife including fish, amphibians, and invertebrates. Runoff from roads treated with road salt can cause salinization of soils and may kill or damage many plant species. Salt spray can also damage plants, destroying habitat and food resources for local wildlife.

2 INFRASTRUCTURE DAMAGE

Salt is highly corrosive. It can affect our clothes, shoes, pets, lawns, gardens, and vehicles. In our communities, it damages sidewalks, roads, buildings, and bridges and leads to increased maintenance costs.

3 OVERUSE

The concentration of chlorides has sharply increased in many bodies of water since the widespread adoption of road salt in the 1970s. Approximately 2-3 million tonnes of road salt are applied in Ontario annually, not including salt applied by homeowners, on private roads, and in parking lots, where it is estimated that snow removal contractors and the general public use 10-40 times more salt than is needed!

4 SENSITIVITY ON THE SHIELD

Recent research has shown that lakes low in phosphorus and calcium, like those in Muskoka, are more susceptible to the effects of chloride at a much lower concentration than previously thought, resulting in slow development, reduced reproduction and low survival in the zooplankton species that form the base of the aquatic food chain.

5 DRINKING WATER

Chloride from winter salt is highly mobile and will eventually make its way to surface water and drinking water wells. The Canadian Drinking Water Quality Guideline for chloride is ≤250 mg/L. Above this level, drinking water may taste salty and distribution systems may begin to corrode.

LEARN MORE!

Muskoka Watershed Council
www.muskokawatershed.org

The District Municipality of Muskoka
www.muskoka.on.ca