

Adopt a Low (Road) Salt Habit!

Salt, as harmless as it sounds, is a chemical that can harm both our personal health and that of our local creeks and streams.

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.

Here are other impacts road salts can have on our environment:

- At high concentrations, chloride is toxic to fish and insects.
- At lower levels, chloride can negatively affect the fish and insect populations by reducing reproduction and survival rates of young.
- Direct road salt splash can kill plants and grass.
- Sodium in road salt can destroy soil stability, decreasing the ability of the soil to filter water, and increasing soil erosion.



Adopt a Low-Salt Diet for our roads, sidewalks and local streams

Here are some tips for using road salt wisely:

- Shovel (and use the right tool for the job). The more snow and ice you remove manually, the less salt you will have to use and the more effective it will be when you do use it.
- 15°F is too cold for salt. Most salts stop working at this temperature. Use sand instead for traction, but remember that sand does not melt ice.
- For best results, apply salt to cleared surfaces. The salt crystals should not overlap but be spread out a few inches apart.
- More salt does not mean more melting. Use less than 4 pounds of salt per 1,000 square feet (an average parking spot is about 150 square feet). One pound of salt is approximately a heaping 12-ounce coffee mug.
- Sweep up extra. If salt or sand is visible on dry pavement it is no longer doing any work and will be washed away into your local streams thru a storm drain or ditch system.
- Even if the de-icer says it's safe for pets - look at the ingredients! Calcium and magnesium chloride can burn their paws. Use a product with glycol or just use sand. And when you take your animals on a walk, cover their feet and/or wash them off after a walk.

For more information, go to www.youtube.com and search for 'Improved Water Maintenance: Good Choices for Clean Water.'

Information is provided by the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization.

Visit our website for more conservation tips on how to Keep Your Yard Green and Our Waters Clean!

To learn more ►►►

Claire Posius, Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator
216-524-6580, ext. 16. cposius@cuyahogawcd.org
www.EuclidCreekWatershed.org; www.cuyahogawcd.org

