



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH

FACT SHEET

GUIDE NO. 7
ROCK SALT ALTERNATIVES



Fifty five percent (55%) of chlorine from road salt enters the river through storm water runoff and can be toxic to aquatic life.

however, recent studies have shown that 55% of chlorine in road salt is being washed from roads, driveways and sidewalks through storm water runoff and into the river where it can be toxic to fish and other aquatic life. It is also toxic to many plants as well.

Try these tips for keeping your driveway and sidewalk clear and dry this winter:

Shovel or plow first. Removing snow buildup means using less salt and makes it more effective.

Use salt, deicers and abrasives only where needed, such as on slopes or in high traffic areas.

Consider using only abrasives like sand, sawdust or cat litter to create traction. Sweep them up in the spring to keep them from washing away and becoming a pollutant.

According to the National Research Council (NRC), road salt use in the United States ranges from 8 million to 12 million tons of NaCl per year.

Road salt is a very effective method to help keep our roadways clear of ice during winter months,

Apply deicers evenly using a broad cast spreader instead of by the handful.

Choose round pellets. They reach the icy surface faster.

Try an alternative product. Calcium magnesium acetate (CMA) was developed as a deicing alternative because it has fewer adverse environmental impacts than salt and does not cause corrosion. Although CMA is more expensive than rock salt, it is recommended for environmentally sensitive areas.*

Read labels. Know what you are applying and the effects of exposure. Some deicing chemicals corrode metal, damage concrete, kill lawns and harm pets by burning their feet and making them sick when they lick their feet.

* Information from SEMCOG.org



Mississippi Watershed Management Organization www.mwmo.org

If necessary, use a broadcast spreader and round pellets to apply deicers.