

Safe Sidewalks, Clean Water: Smart Salting for Residents

Agenda:

- How winter salt impacts our environment
- Why it's a growing regional concern
- Simple steps you can take to apply just the right amount of salt to maintain safety in the winter
- *Stay to the end for the raffle!*



WINTER SALT WEBINARS



SAFE SIDEWALKS, CLEAN WATER: SMART SALTING FOR RESIDENTS

January 21, 2026 | 1 – 1:30 pm

Learn how winter salt impacts our environment, why it's a growing regional concern, and the simple steps you can take at home—before, during, and after storms—to apply just the right amount of salt to maintain safety in the winter. Learn application tips, alternatives to salt, and other ways you can be #wintersaltsmart while protecting the environment.

- Speakers: Renee Bourassa (ICPRB); Rebecca Murphy (NVRC)

COMMUNITY WINTER SALT MANAGEMENT IN ACTION

January 23, 2026 | 1 – 1:30 pm

This session is tailored for HOA and other community association residents, board members, community managers, and maintenance team members.

- Speakers: Benjamin Rhoades (Reston Association); Janine Pollack (Columbia Association); Camryn Arnstein (MDE)

Attendees will also have the chance to win a free sidewalk ice scraper!

www.potomacriver.org/webinars



Maryland
Department of
the Environment



Winter Salt Week 2026



MONDAY
JAN 26
1:30 ET

**Freshwater Salinization
Causes, Consequences, and Trends**
Dr. Megan Rippy and Dr. Stan Grant, Virginia Tech

TUESDAY
JAN 27
1:30 ET

Salt Wise Stories
Phill Sexton, WIT Advisors
Aron Rodman, Extra Mile Snowplowing LLC

WEDNESDAY
JAN 27
1:30 ET

Smart Salting Contracts
Martin Tirado, Snow and Ice Management Assn
Jim Turcan, Cornerstone Partners Hort. Serv. Co.

THURSDAY
JAN 29
1:30 ET

Engineering Solutions
Connie Fortin, Bolton & Menk
Wilf Nixon, Professional Showfighters Association

FRIDAY
JAN 30

Virtual Conversation Table Options: **Advocating for Change (12-1pm ET)** hosted by Abby Hileman and Mary Rooney; **Salt Monitoring 101 (1-2pm ET)** hosted by Lauren Eaton and Paige Vichiola

www.wintersaltweek.org



Poll



Speakers



Rebecca Murphy

rmurphy@novaregion.org

Coastal Program Manager

Northern Virginia Regional Commission



Renee Bourassa

rbourassa@icprb.org

Director, Communications and Education

Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin



Why should we care about winter salt?

Salt applied to paved surfaces in the winter helps keep us safe from icy surfaces while allowing businesses, emergency services, and other operations to stay open.

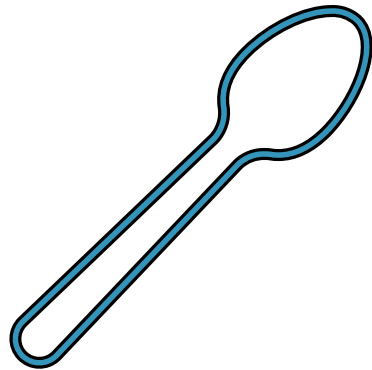


Did you know...

1 tablespoon of winter salt

=

**Permanent pollution of
5 gallons of water**



Winter Salt Impacts: Environment

Salt doesn't disappear after winter storms!

Runoff from salted roads infiltrates into freshwater streams and lakes, causing:

- Persistence in groundwater
- Stress to numerous species of animals and plants
 - Long-term ecosystem biodiversity disruption and biodiversity loss

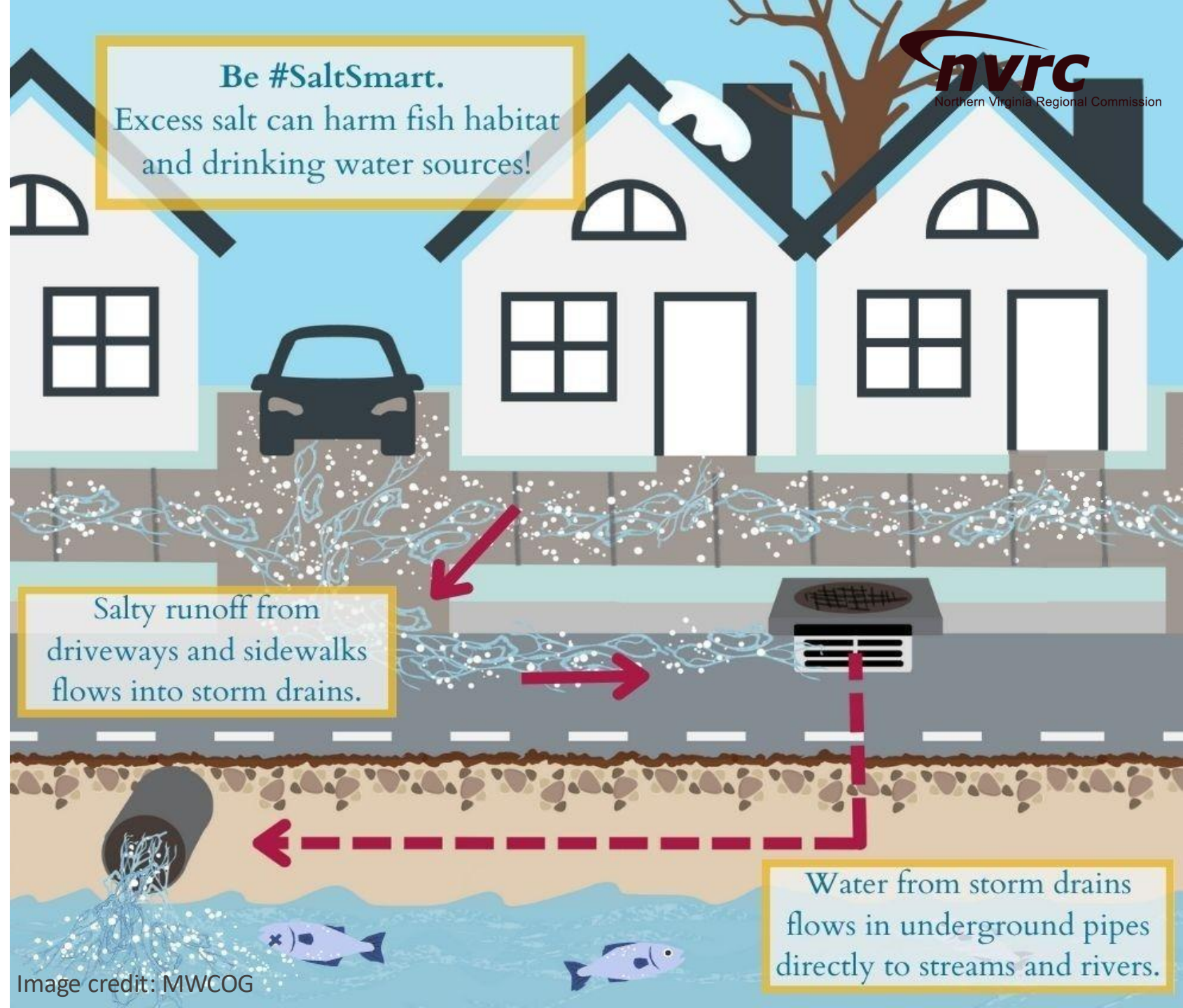


Image credit: MWCOG

Winter Salt Impacts: Environment

- Damage to trees, shrubs, and other vegetation that cannot tolerate salt inundation

Special Consideration: Your pet's paws!

Image Credit: Salt damage on yew (Joseph LaForest, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org)



UGA5025082

Winter Salt Impacts: Drinking Water

Salt levels continue to increase in major DMV drinking water sources – Potomac River and Occoquan Reservoir:

- Difficult and expensive to treat and remove salt from water
- Health considerations for those on low-sodium diets
- Taste complaints!

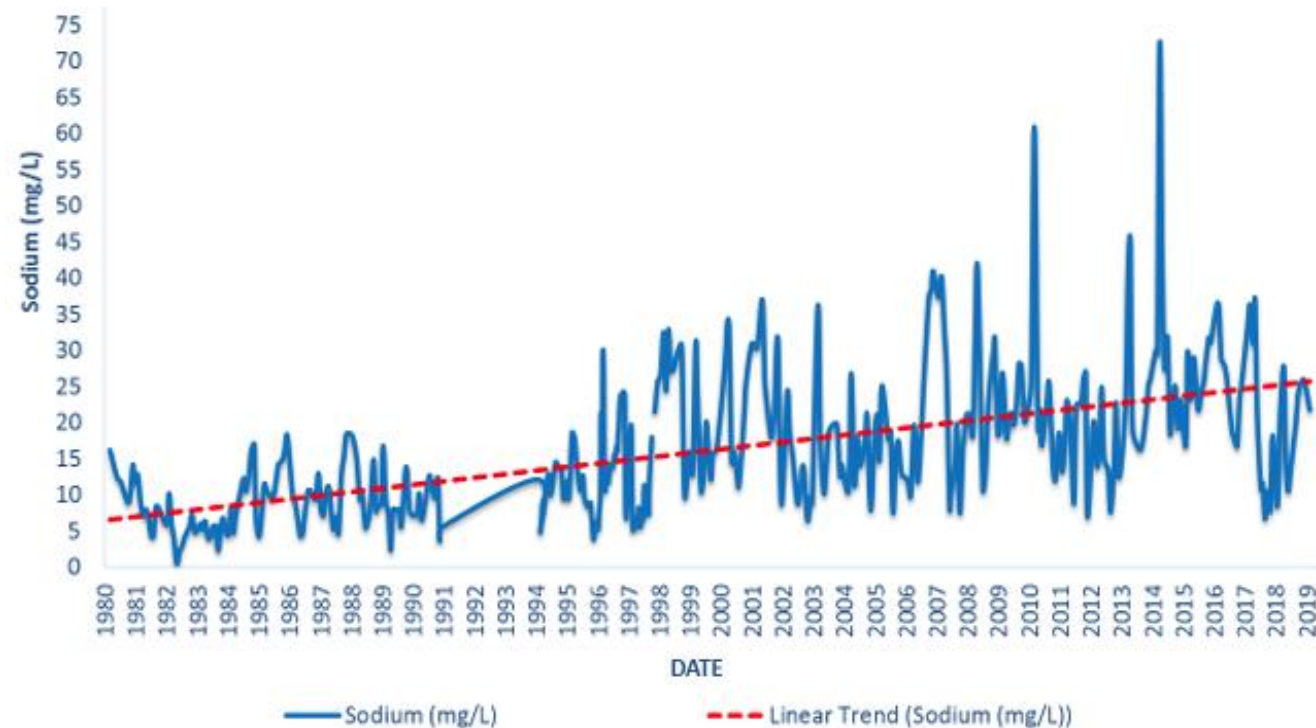


Figure 3. Trends in sodium levels at the drinking water intake on the Occoquan Reservoir.

Winter Salt Impacts: Infrastructure

- Corrosive effects on vehicles and infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, sidewalks, and parking lots
- Results in need for increased maintenance and repairs over time
- **AAA estimates that the average repair cost for corrosion or rust caused by salt is about \$500**



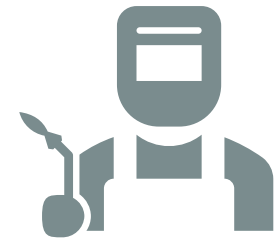
Summary of Winter Salt Impacts



High costs and effort to reduce and/or undo salt inundation to water sources and drinking water



Long-term damage to the environment & wildlife



Ongoing maintenance and repair for infrastructure & vehicles

Disclaimer



REMEMBER

Safety first!

What you can do to make a difference...

How to be winter salt smart



**STEP 1:
SHOVEL**

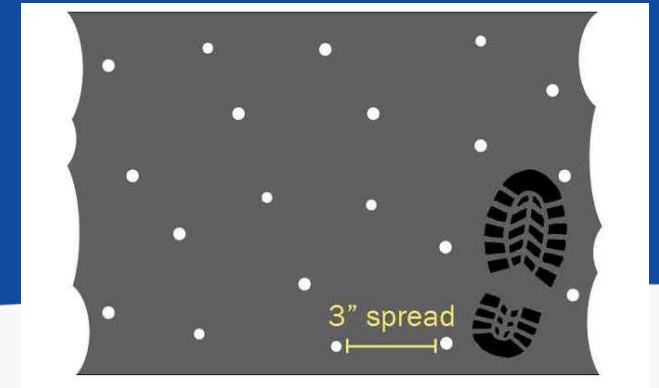


**STEP 2:
SALT LIGHTLY**



**STEP 3:
SWEEP IT UP**

Use the correct amount of salt



DO THIS



NOT THAT



Salt in the right places



Let the sun do its job



Use bird seed for traction



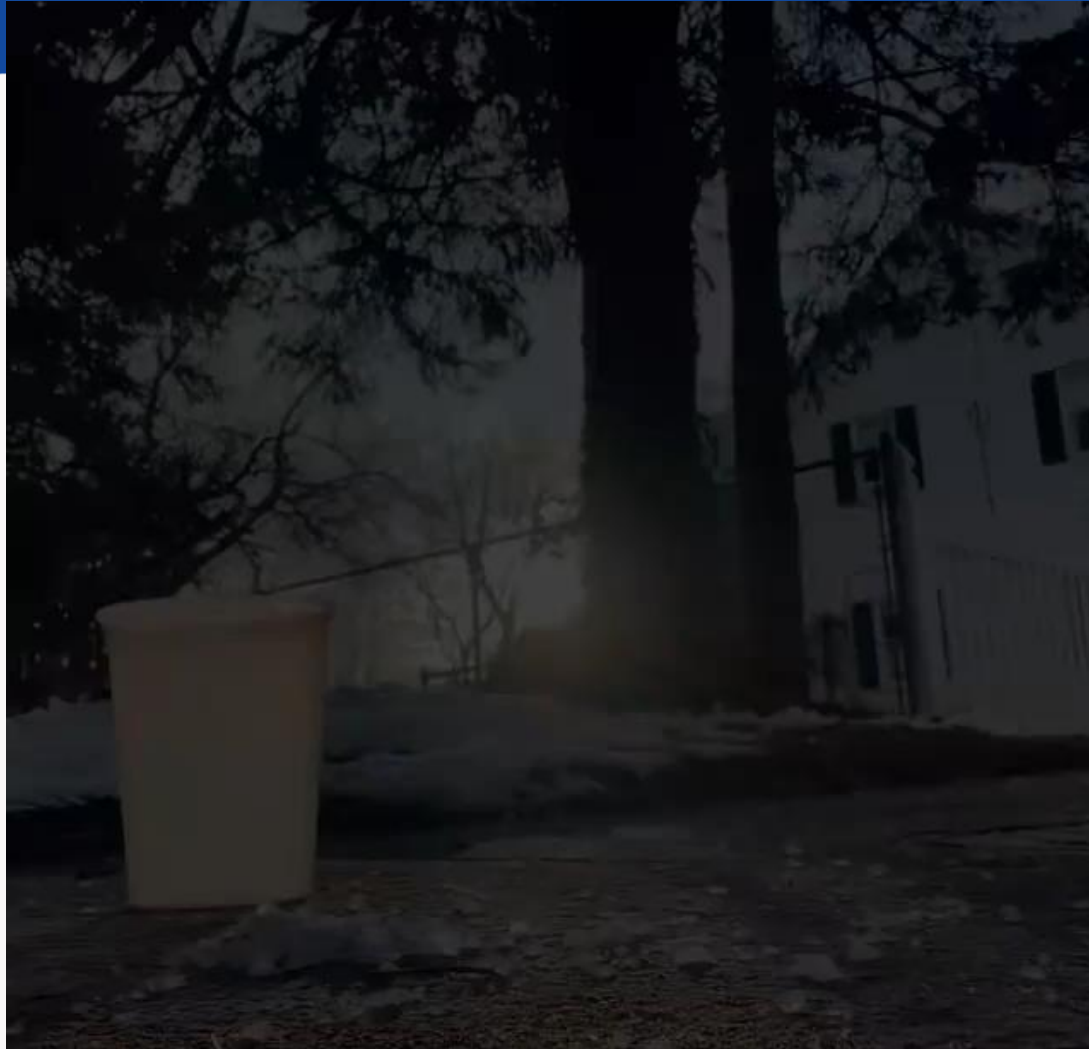
But what about other materials?!



Use a tarp to cover stairs/pathways



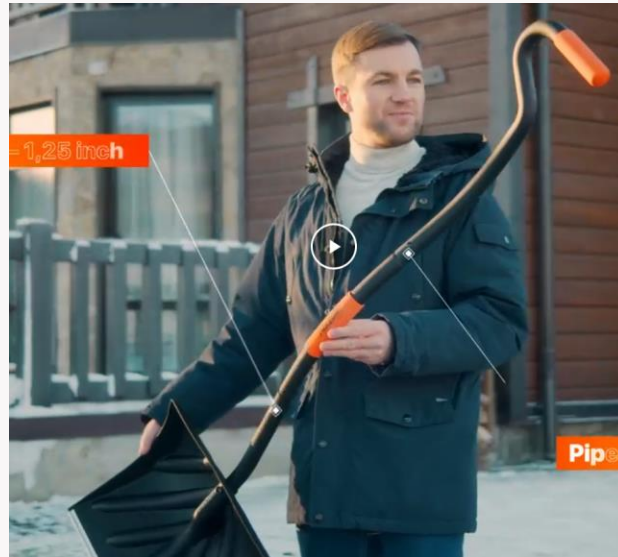
Sweep it up



Helpful Tools



Sidewalk ice scraper



Good shovel



Electric snow shovel



Snow blower

Low *Price* High



What you can do to make a difference...

How to be winter salt smart



**STEP 1:
SHOVEL**



**STEP 2:
SALT LIGHTLY**



**STEP 3:
SWEEP IT UP**

What you can do to make a difference...

Spread the word... not the salt!

- Share on social media
- Talk to your neighbors, family, and friends
- Let businesses know your expectations
- Join a Salt Watch program in your local stream

More resources at www.potomacriver.org/salt



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JOIN US FOR THE

WINTER SALT WEEK

OPEN HOUSE

SATURDAY
JANUARY 31
10:00AM TO 1:00PM



DMV Winter Salt Week

By Izaak Walton League of America

Follow

Izaak Walton League of America Headquarters

Jan 31 from 10am to 1pm EST

On Sale Dec 17 at 8:00 AM

Remind me

Details

Raffle time!

Two winners will receive a
32" DeWalt Carbon Steel Blade Ice Scraper



Raffle prizes provided by the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin
Winners: Please contact rbourassa@icprb.org



Questions?



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