

Community Partners for Clean Streams Monthly eMonitor



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Up Front

The eMonitor is designed to keep our Partners and friends updated on CPCS, stormwater management issues, provide helpful information to reduce stormwater and nonpoint source pollution, recognize new Partners, highlight upcoming events, and create networking opportunities. We hope you enjoy each edition of the Monthly eMonitor and welcome any comments, concerns, or suggestions.

Let it Snow

With the winter season in full swing, the use of deicing chemicals on parking lots, sidewalks and roadways increases. It is important that these chemicals be used and stored properly because overuse may lead to damage to both the natural environment and our health. Deicing chemicals can destroy roadside vegetation, corrode pavement and cars, degrade aquatic ecosystems, and contaminate the water supply. The most commonly used deicer is sodium chloride (road salt), and high levels of this chemical in our drinking water can cause hypertension and aggravate heart disease.



This issue of the eMonitor provides information about the use of deicers on roads and pavement and their effect on the water quality of Washtenaw County's waterways. It also provides tips on ways to reduce deicer usage.

Using and Storing Deicing Chemicals

It is important to use and store deicing chemicals in the proper manner. Below you will find some techniques and best practices on how to do so.

Storing Deicers

Because most deicers are highly soluble it is important to keep them dry and contained.

- Store stockpiles in a permanent, roofed structure.
- Keep non-stockpiled deicers in water proof containers.
- Store deicers on an impermeable surface, e.g. asphalt.
- Construct a berm around stockpiles.
- Sweep up any “migrating” deicers
- Prevent storage areas from draining into a stormwater system.
- Avoid storing deicers or piling snow near streams or other water bodies.



Responding to Winter Weather

Winter weather can take many forms. It is important that maintenance personnel consider the precipitation type (sleet, hail, freezing rain, or snow) and wind conditions before they apply deicer.

Only apply the amount of deicer necessary to achieve safe driving and walking conditions.

If you use a contractor to apply deicer at your site be sure that the application equipment is “calibrated” to determine the appropriate and even distribution of deicers. Tailgating or broadcasting of deicers is financially wasteful and promotes product overuse.



Alternatives to Road Salt

There are a variety of alternatives to road salt (sodium chloride). However, many of these are still problematic. - -

- Any chemicals containing either sodium or chloride cause similar damage to road salt.

- Chemicals containing glycol can be toxic to humans and aquatic life.

- Chemicals containing urea can cause nitrogen contamination.

- Sand is inexpensive but can clog drains and smother aquatic organisms.

- Calcium magnesium acetate (CMA) is the best choice to date. It has little effect on human and environmental health and does not damage infrastructure or vehicles. However, CMA is more expensive than other alternatives.



Reducing Deicer Use

There are several things you can do that will reduce the amount of deicer needed on your site. Below is a list of tips to follow.

Only Buy What You Need

When purchasing deicer, check your inventory, calculate what you need and buy **only** that amount.



Mechanical Removal and Cleanup

Mechanically remove as much snow and ice as possible before applying deicer. Once the ice and snow has melted, sweep up excess deicing materials for later use.



Calibration and Maintenance

Maintain application equipment and calibrate it before each use to avoid scatter and waste.



Select Alternatives

Limit deicers or select an alternate product for use on low traffic and straight, level areas.

Concentration

Concentrate application in the crown or high side of pave areas. As they melt, deicers flow downhill.



To Get Help

For more information about deicers contact the following organizations:

- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality at (800) 662-9278
- Community Partners for Clean Streams at (734) 222-6833
- Michigan Department of Transportation at (517) 373-2090



CPCS News

New Community Partners

Welcome to our new partners this month and thank you to our renewed ones. Together we can make a difference to keep Washtenaw County's waterways clean!



Renewing Partners

Barrett Paving Materials
Superior Township
Ann Arbor Township
Pittsfield Village Condominium
UBE Machinery, Inc.

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