



# Road Salt

In Canada, road salt is often used to keep our roads safe and as a de-icer, or an ice prevention agent. *Did you know that road salt can also contaminate our drinking water sources, impact vegetation, aquatic habitats, wildlife, and soil composition, and damage cars, roads, and clothing?*

The most commonly used products contain sodium chloride and calcium chloride, which can negatively impact water quality if they run off the roads and enter drinking water sources (both ground and surface water).

## Road Salt as a Drinking Water Threat

The application, handling and storage of road salt are considered drinking water threats under Ontario's *Clean Water Act, 2006*. Due to its potential to affect drinking water quality, there are numerous risk management plans in the Quinte area that aim to protect municipal drinking water sources.

## Where is Road Salt a Drinking Water Threat

The application, handling and storage of road salt are considered drinking water threats in vulnerable areas around municipal drinking water sources. The Quinte Source Protection Plan identifies low, moderate and significant drinking water threat policies for existing and future road salt activities. The application of road salt is considered to be significant in an area that is determined to be vulnerable and the percentage of impervious (paved) surfaces is at least 8% but less than 30% near municipal wells and 6-8% or higher near municipal intakes. The potential exposure to precipitation or runoff determines if the handling and storage of road salt is considered a significant drinking water threat.

## Salt Management Plans

Municipalities and the Ministry of Transportation should prepare, or if already existing, review and update their salt management plan(s) to comply with Environment Canada's *Code of Practice for the Environmental Management of Road Salt*.



## Risk Management Plans

Risk Management Plans (RMPs) are required where the application of road salt on private roads and parking lots is or would be considered a significant drinking water threat. RMPs establish management measures related to road salt threats. These measures may include relocation of storage facilities, application guidelines, installing informative stickers on storage bins, and/or adoption of best management practices.



## Prohibition

The municipality should prohibit the future handling and storage of road salt in the most vulnerable areas:

- Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs) A and B surrounding municipal wells in Deloro, Madoc, Peats Point, Point Anne, and Tweed.
- Intake Protection Zones (IPZs) 1 and/or 2 surrounding municipal intakes for Belleville, Deseronto, Napanee, Ameliasburgh, and Picton where the quantity of road salt is greater than 5,000 tons and,
- Intake Protection Zone 1 in Ameliasburgh, Point Anne, and Picton where the quantity of road salt is greater than 500 tons.

## Restricted Land Use

Restricted land use allows municipalities to identify areas where the handling, storage, or application of road salts are either prohibited or require a risk management plan (WHPAs A and B, and IPZs 1 and 2).

## What Can You Do?

As a resident, you can use alternatives for salt like sand or kitty litter on slippery areas for extra traction. Use the directed amount of de-icer listed on the package which is often less than you think you need, and do not apply road salt in temperatures lower than 10 degrees Celsius because it will not be effective.

