



Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee LETS CURB SALT USE



The UMRCC works to promote & preserve natural and recreational resources through wise use, conservation, and management

The overutilization of road salt is costing tax payers and putting our freshwater resources and the foundation of our economy at risk. Chloride used in deicing and water softeners is making the Upper Mississippi River saltier and is becoming a major concern for the ecosystem. Implementing proper management efforts is essential to best combat against these emerging threats to our natural freshwater resources, economy, and infrastructure.

[UMRCC chloride resolution](#)

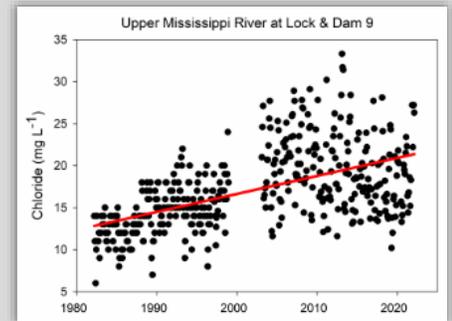
Salt degrades freshwater resources

Salt pollution is detrimental to our freshwater lakes, streams, and drinking water. Once in a system, it is impossible to get rid of. High concentrations of salt (sodium chloride) stress the plants and animals and inhibit natural growth. Over the past several decades, the Upper Mississippi River has seen a 77% increase in chloride concentrations.



Salt degrades infrastructure

Salt erodes away and damages concrete, brick, stone, and reinforcing rods that make up our homes, bridges, and roads. Across the nation, \$5 billion is spent annually to repair these damages and were losing the battle as high salt usage continues.



5 strategies to curb salt use:

1. Optimize mechanical removal
2. Calibrate equipment
3. Incorporate brine
4. Properly train operators
5. Educate the public

Just one teaspoon of road salt is enough to pollute 5 gallons of water permanently

5 Strategies to curb salt use:

Optimize mechanical removal

Equipping plow trucks with multiple blades will allow for effective movement of as much snow as possible off the road surface as quickly as possible.

Calibrate equipment

Equipment that is properly calibrated allows for precise adjustments of application rates to best approach and respond to each unique storm and changing condition.

Incorporate brine

Brine works faster and requires less salt than the solid rock salt option, as well as prevent the formation of a bond between snow and the pavement enabling a quicker return to better road conditions.

Properly train operators

Implementing training for operators on salt management practices is necessary. Training information includes an emphasis on pre-storm planning, deicer materials, precision application rates, mechanical removal, and the environmental impacts of salt.

Educate the public

Informing residents along the UMR of the increasing chloride contamination and how to take a proactive approach to winter weather will promote reasonable expectations and goals for our winter roads.



**We all need to do our part to
reduce salt use**

Additional Resources:

[Salt Wise Wisconsin](#)

[Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#)