



MYTHS AND FACTS

ON THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF ROAD SALTS



MYTH

Implementing the Road Salts Code of Practice will be very expensive.

FACT

The Code of Practice is a voluntary measure that asks municipalities using more than 500 tonnes of road salt in a winter, or those with environmentally vulnerable areas to develop road salts management plans. The plans cover the storage and application of road salts and the disposal of snow containing road salts. Each municipality can figure out the best way for itself to implement the plan so that they can maintain road safety, reduce harm to the environment, and be fiscally responsible. Some measures will in fact result in savings on salt and maintenance time.

MYTH

Implementing the Road Salts Code of Practice will put lives at risk.

FACT

Road safety is of paramount importance to the federal government. Building on best practices developed by the Transportation Association of Canada, municipalities can find ways to more efficiently and effectively store and apply road salts and dispose of snows that contain road salts AND maintain road safety. The Code of Practice is a voluntary measure therefore it gives flexibility to the road authorities to adopt measures that will not impact road safety.

MYTH

Road Salts don't do that much damage. There's no point in implementing the Code of Practice.

FACT

On the contrary. An average of five million tonnes of road salts are used in Canada each year. Scientific assessments in Canada and elsewhere show conclusively that heavy use of road salts leads to significant damage to vegetation and run-off causes harm to aquatic life, birds, plants and animals. All chloride ions from road salts eventually find their way into

waterways, whether by direct run-off into surface water or by moving through the soil and groundwater. By storing road salts more safely, applying salts more efficiently and at the right times, and disposing of snows containing road salts more carefully, harm to the environment can be reduced.

MYTH

The Government of Canada is banning road salts.

FACT

No, the Government of Canada is not banning road salts. Road safety is a priority. Accordingly, the Government of Canada is recommending a broad range of management activities such as improved application technologies, better staff training, increased use of road weather information systems, better storage and handling techniques, and the use of alternative products when appropriate. These actions will contribute to a reduction in the negative environmental impacts of salt use without compromising road safety.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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