



FRESHWATER



March 21, 2022

Dear Members of the Minnesota House and Senate,

We the undersigned organizations ask for your support in passing the Smart Salting Bill (HF 2908/SF 2768) so that it can become law during the 2022 legislative session. This bill helps protect water and habitat, removes barriers for snow removal professionals and is good for small businesses.

We know that a single teaspoon of salt contains enough chloride to permanently pollute five gallons of fresh water. Currently, in the Twin Cities Metro Area, we're applying around 365,000 tons of salt on our roads and paved surfaces every year. An estimated 78 percent of that salt will eventually find its way to our groundwater supplies or to our surface waters, where it is toxic to fish and other aquatic life.

Unfortunately, much of our road salt is wasted — used in greater quantities than is needed, or used in the wrong conditions. We call this over-salting, and contrary to popular belief, more salt does not equal safer roads or sidewalks. It only means an excess of harmful chemicals impacting our water quality for generations to come.

The antidote to over-salting is smart salting. As watershed management organizations and watershed districts from across the metro area, we work with our state and local partners to sponsor smart salting training for public and private snow removal professionals. This training not only reduces the problem of over-salting; it also helps our salt applicators to become more effective, leading to improved public safety outcomes as well as cost savings.

The availability and accessibility of this smart salting training is critical to reducing the harmful impacts of chloride while maintaining safety on our roadways. We ask for your support in providing more training opportunities to our snow plow drivers and snow removal contractors.

We also need your support in relieving the burden of liability from those who are certified smart salters using best practices. We know from experience working with snow removal contractors and business owners that they know what to do and want to help. But they worry about lawsuits from patrons who demand they blanket even dry pavement with salt granules, believing falsely that this increases safety.



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If current trends continue, researchers have projected that some waterbodies in the metro area may no longer be able to support aquatic life by 2050. Please help reverse these trends and protect water quality by supporting SF 2768/HF 2908.

Sincerely,

Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Capitol Region Watershed District

Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District

Coon Creek Watershed District

Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission

Freshwater Society

City of Fridley

Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

Nine Mile Creek Watershed District

Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission

Rice Creek Watershed District

Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District

Shingle Creek Watershed Management Commission

West Mississippi Watershed Management Commission

Valley Branch Watershed District