



Working to protect the Mississippi River
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.

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February 15th, 2023

RE: Support for SF 755 - Salt Applicators; Voluntary Certification Program

Chair Hawj and committee members,

On behalf of Friends of the Mississippi River, I am writing to express our support for [SF 755](#).

As you know, deicing salts can help melt snow and ice and keep us safe in winter. However, excess salts eventually wash into our waters, harming fish, mussels and other river life.

As noted in the [2016 State of the River Report](#), chloride levels in the metro Mississippi River increased 81 percent between 1985 and 2014. More than 1.1 million tons of chloride is released into our environment annually in Minnesota - damaging infrastructure and threatening pets, wildlife, and aquatic organisms.

Unfortunately, salt is a permanent pollutant; it does not degrade over time in our environment. Just one teaspoon of road salt irreversibly pollutes five gallons of water. Today, 42 Twin Cities waterbodies are contaminated with excess chloride.

SF 755 can help address the risks posed by excess chloride application through two key measures:

- **Voluntary certification program (Sec. 1, Subd. 2.):** Building on Minnesota's track record of providing high-quality 'smart salt' training programs, this bill provides for a voluntary certification program that promotes best management practices for snow and ice removal and deicer application that protect water quality without compromising public safety.
- **Liability reduction (Sec. 1, Subd. 3.):** By allowing some reduction in liability for certified applicators, the bill provides an important incentive for snow and ice removal and deicer application businesses to acquire certification, reduce business costs and improve natural resources outcomes.

We greatly appreciate Senator Morrison's strong leadership on this issue and urge you to support SF 755 this session.

Sincerely,

Trevor Russell
Water Program Director
Friends of the Mississippi River