



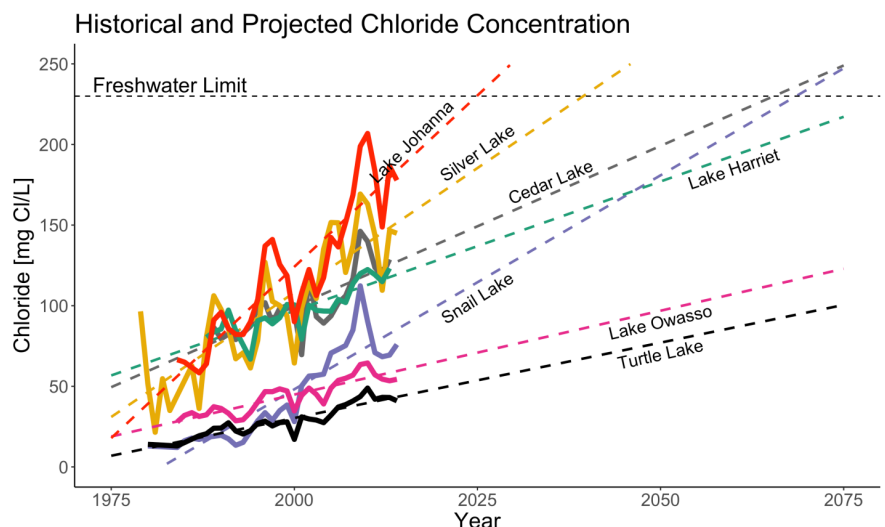
Minnesota Needs to Pass HF 820 (Tabke)/SF 755 (Morrison)

BACKGROUND:

- Large scale (roads, highways) and smaller scale (parking lots, commercial properties) overuse of salt for de-icing is widespread in Minnesota
- A study by the University of Minnesota found that about 78% of salt applied in the Twin Cities for winter maintenance is either transported to groundwater or remains in the local lakes and wetlands
- Deicing salt is only effective at certain temperatures (if pavement is cooler than 15 degrees F, salt will not work properly.)
- Property managers and landowners are primarily responsible for salt use and application on their property to reduce the risk of injury from icy conditions.

Why is de-icing salt a problem?

Chlorides in deicing salts are damaging Minnesota's water and infrastructure. Chlorides from deicers dissolve in runoff water, and travel with that water to lakes, streams and groundwater. Once dissolved there is no practical way to remove chloride. It's accumulating in all our waters, especially in our lakes and wetlands. **Minnesota currently has 50 chloride-impaired water bodies and 75 more high-risk.** (MPCA).



Above: The future of five Minnesota lakes if present rate of chloride use continues. Source: Freshwater



A little does a lot of damage. **One teaspoon permanently pollutes five gallons of water.** (Fortin)

Ecological Damage:

- Toxic to aquatic life, especially native fish and the food chain on which healthy fisheries depend
- Prevents lakes from turning, and causes less oxygen in lakes. This leads to permanent ecological destruction of our lakes.
- Potential human health concern through drinking water
- Negatively alters soil structure and kills vegetation

Proposed Legislation

The legislation proposes to identify best practices in statute, which would provide a strong defense for anyone facing negligence lawsuits regarding salt application. It also expands training statewide for the MPCA's Smart Salting Training.

This approach is voluntary, and good for business and clean water:

1. Encourages training and use of science-based best practices known to reduce deicer usage yet not compromise public safety.
2. Reduces the fear of lawsuits when applicators and property managers are using best practice
3. Lessens deicer use in Minnesota, reducing costly damage to infrastructure, vehicles, landscaping, soil, lakes, wetlands, and drinking water sources.

MINNESOTA'S FRESH WATERS DESERVE PROTECTION

- Investment in property management trainings for Smart Salting will increase public knowledge and awareness of the issue as well as provide suggestions on sustainable salt practices in the future
- Property managers will receive training on smart salting practices and will receive limited liability coverage protection for proof of following MPCA's best practices. Trainings will be accessible to Minnesotans statewide and will provide information to property managers on effective salt application, suggestions for alternative management practices, and tools and resources for further inquiries.

For more information on Smart Salting trainings visit:

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/smart-salting-training>

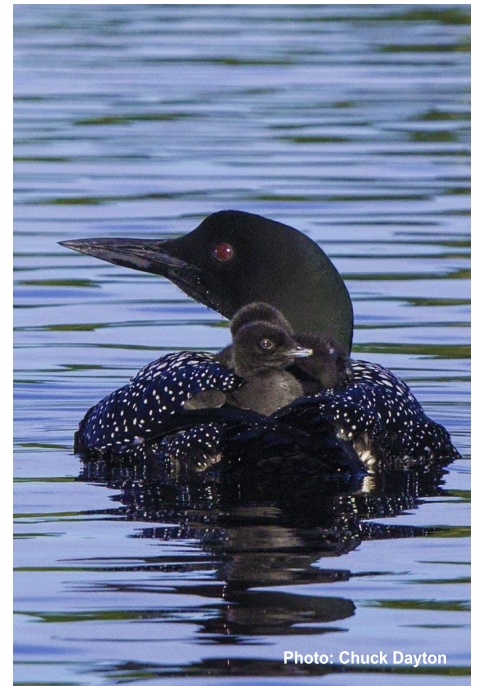


Photo: Chuck Dayton



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