

Understanding Sodium Chloride BMP Equipment and Practices

Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District

Project Background

Understanding the current Road Salt application BMP's, equipment and incentive programs of other organizations, states and partners is critical to showcasing best methods, equipment and charting a course for success here in Vermont.

Project Introduction

Salt was first utilized within the U.S. on roads in NH in 1938. By 1941 a total of 5,000 tons of salt were applied to highways nationwide. Today, between 10 to 20 million tons of salt are applied annually. This increase in road salt application is having a negative impact on our waterways and infrastructure.

VTDEC is currently in the process of drafting a TMDL for sodium chloride levels, and streams within the District have already been identified as impacted by chloride. The State has deemed that "monitoring chloride levels in surface waters to identify where road salt use may be impacting surface waters" as a key strategy for addressing impacts from transportation infrastructure.

For over a decade, VTtrans and local municipalities have implemented salt reduction BMPs to reduce impacts on local waterways. Other states within the Northeast have implemented initiatives and programs that help incentivize and monitor Sodium Chloride BMP's. The WNRCD in partnership with other organizations are exploring cutting edge equipment utilized in both the reduction strategies and monitoring efforts of sodium chloride application.