

Stormwater Tip:

From the North and South Rivers Watershed Association website, de-icing suggestions:

- Avoid Sodium Chloride or “rock salt” – Traditional rock salt (sodium chloride) is pretty much the worst of all available options.
- Look for “Pet Safe” and “CMA” – Products marketed as “Pet-Safe” will also be eco-friendly. Products containing a significant amount of calcium magnesium acetate or “CMA” are some of the most benign options commonly available.
- Apply in advance of a winter storm – Early attention before a storm will help prevent the formation of ice. When the snow starts falling, the ice melt will create a brine solution, helping to prevent ice from bonding to the surface.
- Disperse ice melt properly – Contrary to popular opinion, using large amounts of ice melt does not affect the speed in which ice and snowmelt. Using too much product can damage surfaces and harm the environment.
- Use a mechanical spreader for accurate coverage – The proper coverage rate is about one cup per square yard. This coverage will fan out and undercut the ice so that you can shovel the walkway clear.
- Continue to disperse ice melt during a storm – This helps to prevent snow from becoming hard-packed on surfaces.
- Don’t use salt as a substitute for shoveling – Sometimes a better shoveling job upfront will eliminate the need for ice melt altogether or let you get away with a bit of sand instead (though overuse of sand can also be a problem).
- Make your own salt brine – Salt brine is a liquid that prevents snow and ice from freezing to hard surfaces, making it easier to shovel or plow. It is a low cost and more environmentally friendly alternative to solid salt. Salt brine uses less salt and works better than solid salt in most conditions. Pet-safe ice melts can be used in salt brine, however, all ice melts can be hazardous to pets, so it’s important to use them carefully. Download the instructions for making salt brine [here](#).