

Help keep Nine Mile Creek on a low salt diet.

All around the Twin Cities our lakes and creeks are becoming too salty from the deicers we use on our driveways and sidewalks in the winter. In the land of 10,000 *freshwater* lakes, this is a problem.



Protect our water.
Use deicers with care.

Always remember to **shovel,**
snow blow or **plow** first,
and only apply a deicer if needed.



Learn more at:

www.ninemilecreek.org



Choosing a Deicer

Frequently Asked Questions

Choosing a Deicer

Protect our Water

What is a deicer? A deicer is a product that melts snow and ice and is used to break the bond between snow/ice and the pavement.

What is rock salt? Rock salt is another name for NaCl or sodium chloride. It is a common deicer that is inexpensive, but it does not melt effectively at low temperatures.

Are any deicers environmentally-friendly? No. All deicers impact the environment.

What does practical melting temperature refer to? This is the lowest temperature that a deicer will melt snow and ice effectively.

What is the practical melting temperature of a deicer blend? It's hard to tell. Refer to the practical melting temperature chart to get an idea of the lowest temperature at which the ingredients work.

When is the best time to apply a deicer? Right after the storm *and* after shoveling. Let the deicer work to break the bond between the snow and pavement and then shovel again.

Should I mix salt and sand together? No. Sand only provides traction when it is on top of snow and ice. Salt will melt the sand into the snow and ice making it ineffective.

T There are no labeling laws when it comes to deicers, so take everything on the bag
i
P with a grain of salt.

Not sure how to pick a deicer?

Read the label. Check the ingredients. Magnesium and calcium chloride work better in colder temperatures. Blends typically consist mostly of sodium chloride because it is cheap. Urea may be listed as pet or plant friendly, but is a poor melter.

Example Label:

NaCl
MgCl ₂
Corrosion Inhibitor

T All labels look different. Ingredients may
i be listed by chemical symbol (e.g. NaCl)
P or spelled out (e.g. Sodium Chloride).

Understand the melting temperature. The temperature listed on the bag may not be the practical melting temperature (the lowest temperature at which the product will melt snow/ice effectively). Refer to the following chart for the practical melting temperature of different deicers. For blends, you will have to make a guess based on the ingredients.

Chemical	Lowest Practical Melting Temp
Sodium Chloride (NaCl)	15° F
Magnesium Chloride (MgCl ₂)	5° F
Calcium Chloride (CaCl ₂)	-20° F
Urea (carbonyl diamide)	20° F
Blends	??

Follow these simple steps to help protect the health of our waters:

Shovel that snow. The more snow that you can shovel or snow blow, the less salt you will need. Get out early and keep up with the storm.



Don't over apply. More salt does not mean more melting. Use less than four pounds of salt per 1,000 feet². One pound of salt is about a heaping twelve-ounce coffee cup.



Temperature matters. Common deicers don't melt snow and ice well when it gets very cold, so should not be applied. Instead, use a small amount of sand for traction.



Sweep up extra. Salt and sand on dry pavement is not doing any work and will be washed into the creek. Sweep up the extra and reuse it.



T Direct downspouts away from sidewalks
i
P and driveways to prevent icy spots.