Winter maintenance and protecting drinking water sources

The County of Brant is committed to providing safe drinking water

The County relies on surface water and groundwater for drinking water. Sodium, chloride and other chemicals used to melt snow and ice can make their way into drinking water sources. Managing these chemicals is an important part of protecting drinking water.

We are located in the Grand River Source Protection Area of the Lake Erie Source Protection Region. Grand River Source Protection Plan policies manage activities that pose threats to drinking water sources.

Winter maintenance-related threats to drinking water sources

- Application and storage of road salt
- Snow storage piles and facilities

Salt, oil, heavy metals and grease trapped in snow from roads or parking lots can enter drinking water sources as the snow melts.

We all have a role to play in protecting our drinking water.

ROAD SALT
What keeps us safe in winter can also affect our drinking water.

How can you help protect drinking water?

- Do not apply salt during or before rain
- Once applied, give salt time to melt snow and ice
- Clear fallen snow as soon as possible to prevent ice from forming
- Redirect downspouts away from paved surfaces, including roads, sidewalks and parking lots
- Salt is most effective between 0˚C and -12˚C; it will not work below -18˚C
- Store salt in dry areas away from wells, watercourses, ponds and wetlands
- Store snow in areas where meltwater will not run across paved surfaces
- Maintain a spill response plan and train workers to respond to spills and overapplication
- Report spills and overapplication right away to the Spills Action Centre at 1.800.268.6060

brant.ca | **info@brant.ca** | @BrantCommunity
519.44BRANT (519.442.7268) | 1.855.44BRANT

COUNTY OF Brant Simply Grand

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Where does the salt go?

Road salt doesn't disappear when the snow and ice melt. Sodium, chloride and other contaminants from roads and parking lots can move with meltwater and make their way into surface water and groundwater, *the sources of our drinking water.*

1. **Salt is applied**
   Road salt is used on roads, sidewalks and parking lots to help manage snow and ice.
2. **Snow and ice melt**
   As temperatures rise, melting snow can carry salt and other contaminants such as oil, heavy metals and grease from paved surfaces.
3. **Meltwater moves into the environment**
   Meltwater can make its way toward groundwater and surface water sources. That's why where and how we use and store salt and snow matters.

Every little bit helps

Using only the salt you need, keeping salt properly stored and choosing appropriate locations for snow storage can help reduce the amount of salt and other contaminants reaching drinking water sources.

Resources

Source Water Protection in Ontario
ontario.ca/page/source-protection

Lake Erie Source Protection Region
sourcewater.ca

Smart About Salt – Winter Salt Management Program
smartaboutsalt.com

Watersheds Canada
watersheds.ca/salt

Canada Code of Practice for the Environmental Management of Road Salts
canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/pollutants/road-salts.html

Landscape Ontario Best Practices During Salt Shortages
landscapeontario.com/road-salt-shortage-2025

Ontario Winter Road Safety
ontario.ca/page/winter-driving

Ontario Snow Disposal and De-icing Guidelines
ontario.ca/page/guidelines-snow-disposal-and-de-icing-operations-ontario

County of Brant Winter Maintenance
brant.ca/winter

County of Brant Source Water Protection
brant.ca/water

Contact us to learn more about how to protect drinking water.

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DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION
Our Actions Matter