

Talking Points for Businesses



Opening the Conversation...

Before You Go:

Bring a "Salt Wise business" handout with you so you can leave it with them. We can provide these but they are also available [online](#).

Intro:

Hi I'm (your name) with (name of your organization if applicable). I (come here a lot/ live in the neighborhood, etc) and noticed today that there is a lot of salt on the sidewalk out front. I'm working with the Wisconsin Salt Wise partnership to reduce salt pollution in our lakes, streams and drinking water and have some resources to share. Could I speak to the manager or owner or arrange a time to meet with them at a less busy time of day?

Information to Share:

Try using the handout to facilitate this conversation and then leave the handout with them.

- Once you put salt down, it doesn't go away. Instead, it travels into our lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands, putting our aquatic life at risk and endangering our freshwater resources.
- It only takes one teaspoon of salt to pollute up to 5 gallons of water to a level that is toxic to freshwater organisms.
- Salt also alters the composition of soil, slows plant growth and weakens the concrete, brick and stone that make up our homes, garages, bridges, and roads. One ton of rock salt causes between \$800 and \$3,300 of damage to buildings, bridges and other infrastructure.
- In 2016-2017, more than 38,000 tons of salt were spread on Madison and Dane Co. roads, which is enough to pollute over 29 billion gallons of water. And that doesn't include what was spread on parking lots. In Madison, half of the salt used in winter is spread on parking lots, sidewalks and driveways.

Ask them if they clear their own snow and ice removal or if they hire a contractor. [Use the appropriate section on the next page to continue the conversation.](#) If they are part of a larger complex and are not involved with snow and ice removal, encourage them to share this information with whoever manages it and let them know the public is asking for smarter salting practices.

Talking Points If They Hire a Snow and Ice Removal Company...

Ask Them to Talk to Their Contractor:

- Let them know that you and your customers are concerned about oversalting.
- Find out if they have staff that have gone through the City of Madison's Winter Salt Certification program. If so, let them know you would like these staff to do your snow and ice removal. If not, encourage them to get certified.
- Request a contract that is not based on the amount of salt applied.
- If you see oversalting occur or if there is a lot of salt left over once icy conditions have passed, get in touch with your contractor and ask them to clean it up.

Let Your Customers Know you are Salt Wise:

If you hire a contractor that has gone through the City of Madison's Winter Salt Certification program, you can request a window cling decal to let your customers know you support smart salting practices. Email wisaltwise@gmail.com to request a decal window cling.



Talking Points If They Do Their Own Snow and Ice Removal...

Below are some steps they can take on their own to be Salt Wise. You can use the Business Handout as it also outlines these talking points:

- **Shovel:** Clear walkways and other areas before the snow turns to ice. The more snow you remove manually, the less salt you will have to use and the more effective it will be.
- **Scatter:** A 12 oz. cup of salt is enough to treat an entire 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Scatter the salt leaving space between the grains (as shown in the pattern on the handout). Sweep: Sweep excess salt from walkways and parking lots after a snow event, especially before a rain event to prevent salt from washing down the storm drain to our waterways.
- **Sweep:** Sweep excess salt from walkways and parking lots after a snow event, especially before a rain event to prevent salt from washing down the storm drain to our waterways.
- **Switch:** When pavement temps drop below 15, salt composed of sodium chloride won't work. Switch to sand for traction or a different ice melter that works in lower temperatures.
- **Be Salt Wise all year!** The salt you put in your water softener ends up in local freshwater streams. New, efficient softeners use less than one bag per month. If you're using more – have a professional tune yours up – or, replace it with a high-efficiency model. If your business uses large amounts of softened water, you may be able to apply for a grant from the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District. More info available on the Wisconsin Salt Wise website.

Let your customers know you are Salt Wise:

- If you follow these Salt Wise practices, you can request a window cling decal to let your customers know you support smart salting practices. Email wisaltwise@gmail.com to request a decal window cling.
- Use your social media accounts to share your Salt Wise actions. Use the hashtag **#wisaltwise**.