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Smart Salting

As the thaw sets in and icy roads becomes a distant memory, it's still crucial to understand the impact of our winter habits on the environment. Chloride pollution is a pressing issue, stemming primarily from the salt we use on our roads and sidewalks. When salt is spread on roads and sidewalks to melt ice, it doesn't just disappear with the snow. Instead, it seeps into our soil, groundwater, and eventually, our lakes and rivers. This excess chloride disrupts aquatic ecosystems, harms wildlife, and jeopardizes our water quality.

Residents who want to help should focus on these key practices:

Shovel first: Always shovel any snow or ice away before putting salt onto a hard surface. It takes less salt to do the same job and works more quickly.

Maintain appropriate salt usage: A general guideline is to use no more than 1 to 1.5 cups of salt per every 10 sidewalk squares.

Sweep up extra salt to reuse: If you accidentally used too much salt during one storm, sweep up the extra salt and reuse it. If you leave it on the pavement, it will likely runoff to nearby vegetation, to a local storm drain, or into a local water body.

[To learn more visit the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency website for more information!](#)

Submitted by Pedro De Filippo Vannucci, resident of Falcon Heights and member of the Environment Commission

Is there something you want to see in the Nature Newsflash, or are you an expert and want to be included in future articles? Send your ideas over to Hannah Lynch, Community Development Coordinator, at hannah.b.lynnch@falconheights.org.