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This summary is of a bill that was vetoed by the Governor and may be reconsidered by the General Assembly prior to final adjournment of the 2025–2026 legislative session. This summary is provided for the convenience of the public and members of the General Assembly; it provides a general summary of the bill and may not be exhaustive. This summary has been prepared by the staff of the Office of Legislative Counsel without input from members of the General Assembly and is not intended to aid in the interpretation of legislation or to serve as a source of legislative intent.

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**S.218 (Vetoed). Conservation and development; water quality; salt application; protection from liability**

This bill would have established best management practices (BMPs) for the application of salt and salt alternatives that provided safe conditions on traveled surfaces, reduced the impacts of salt and salt alternatives on the quality of State waters, and provided liability protection for salt applicators applying the BMPs. The bill would have established a Chloride Contamination Reduction Program at the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR). The Program would have provided voluntary education, training, and certification of commercial salt applicators regarding effective application of salt and salt alternatives to provide safe conditions for pedestrians and motor vehicles while also reducing impacts on water quality. “Commercial salt applicator” would have been defined as any individual who for compensation applies salt or salt alternatives, but would not have included municipal or State employees.

ANR would have been required on or before July 1, 2027, to adopt by rule the BMPs. Once the BMPs were adopted, ANR would have been required to offer training for commercial applicators in the implementation of the BMPs. Upon completion of training, a commercial salt applicator would have been designated a certified commercial salt applicator for two years from the date of certification. A certified commercial salt applicator or an owner, occupant, or lessee of real property maintained by a certified commercial salt applicator would have had an affirmative defense against a claim for damages arising from a hazard caused by snow or ice if the hazard was caused solely by snow or ice, and any failure or delay in removing or mitigating the hazard was the result of the certified applicator’s implementation of the BMPs.

The bill would have required ANR in collaboration with the Agency of Transportation on or before November 1, 2027, to make changes to the voluntary Vermont Local Roads curriculum to include BMPs for spreading salt on roads, parking lots, and sidewalks. “Municipal salt applicator” would have been defined as any individual who applies salt or salt alternatives in the capacity as an employee or agent of a town or a municipality. A municipal salt applicator who completed the Vermont Local Roads curriculum providing BMPs for applying salt or salt alternatives would have had an affirmative defense against a claim for damages from snow or ice if the alleged damages were caused solely by a hazard from snow or ice, and any failure or delay in removing or mitigating the hazard was the result of the municipal salt applicator’s implementation of the BMPs learned under the Vermont Local Roads curriculum.

The bill would have required ANR by January 15, 2027, to report to the General Assembly regarding State and municipal storage of salt, salt and sand mixtures, salt alternatives, and sand that is not mixed with salt. The report would have included an inventory of State and municipal facilities used for storage of salt or sand, an estimated number of facilities that are covered or are within 100 yards of a surface water or drinking water source, and an estimate of the cost to cover or move facilities.

Vetoed by the Governor: May 6, 2026

Effective Date: Not applicable