

S.218 "Reducing Chloride Contamination of State Waters" aka the Salt Bill.

S.218 addresses the impacts of sodium chloride (road salt) on infrastructure and water quality in Vermont by reducing salt application on roads and other impervious surfaces without compromising public safety. This will be achieved through development of a voluntary program consisting of best management practices for municipal and commercial / private salt applicators, certification for liability protection, and public education and outreach.

Sec 2. §1362 Chloride Contamination Reduction Program

- The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), in consultation with the Agency of Transportation (AoT), will develop a program for the voluntary education, training, and certification of commercial / private salt applicators.
- This includes the development of best management practices such as techniques to increase the efficiency of use while maintaining safe conditions for pedestrians and motor vehicles, establishing standards for when salt should be used or is unnecessary, and recommending salt alternatives when applicable.

§ 1363 and § 1364 Liability Protection and Presumption of Compliance

- To encourage less salt use, a commercial applicator or property owner that is certified under the state program will be presumed in compliance and receive liability protection as an affirmative defense against a claim for damages if the hazard was solely caused by snow and ice and the applicator was following the best management practices.
- The liability protection does not extend to gross negligence or reckless disregard of a hazard.

§ 1365 Education and Outreach

- ANR will conduct an education and outreach program to notify commercial applicators of the availability of the program and to educate the public in general on how to reduce salt use and the potential harm excessive use of salt causes to water quality, pets, and wildlife.

Sec. 3 Study of Salt and Sand Storage Facilities

- ANR is required to conduct a study on the location and number of salt and sand storage facilities adjacent to surface and ground water and estimate the costs to cover them.

Sec. 4 Municipal Applicators

- The Agency of Transportation will include a voluntary certification program and training on best management practices for municipal applicators as part of the Vermont Local Roads program.
- Municipal applicators that participate in the certification program will receive the same liability protection as commercial applicators (see § 1363).