



make a clear difference for Flathead Lake

Winter maintenance and deicing

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Rock salt and sand are the two most common solutions to slippery walkways and driveways. If used incorrectly, salt can deplete oxygen needed by aquatic life, change soil chemistry, make it difficult for plants to grow and contaminate groundwater. Sand can bury aquatic life, fill in natural habitats and cloud the water.



WHAT CAN WE DO?

The best way to keep chemicals and sand out of the lake is to:

- **Use mechanical means** before applying salt/sand whenever possible.
- **Know what temperatures** are best suited for specific deicers. Rock salt, the most common deicer, is useless at temperatures colder than 15 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Apply deicer before snow falls.** Also known as anti-icing, this method prevents a bond from forming between the ice and pavement/walkway. Once the bond is broken, manual removal is easier. Anti-icing also usually requires less deicing materials.
- **Salt application** – Follow manufacturer's instructions and use only enough to break the ice/pavement bond. Do not apply on vegetation or near waterways. Use less harmful deicers such as calcium magnesium acetate or sodium/potassium acetate. Always sweep up excess salt before it can be washed into our lakes and streams.
- **Sand application** – Use only enough to provide traction on slippery areas. Always sweep up excess sand and gravel after snowmelt.

CLEAN WATER TOOL KIT: Winter maintenance and deicing

WHY DOES IT WORK?

By manually removing as much snow as possible before applying deicers, you can minimize the impact on soil, groundwater, and vegetation by using less deicing substance. Choosing a deicer that works for a specific temperature and closely following application instructions can decrease overall deicer use in the long run.

Choosing the right deicer

Determining which product to use depends upon the situation. A low cost deicer might clear a walkway, but it might also kill adjacent plants, corrode metal, harm floors if tracked inside, and hurt pets. Research the potential impacts of deicers before purchase and use the chart below to determine if the product will work for specific temperatures. After choosing the correct deicer, make sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Calcium Chloride	-25°F
Magnesium Chloride	5°F
Sodium or Potassium Acetate	5°F
Calcium Magnesium Acetate	5°F
Potassium Chloride	12°F
Sodium Chloride	20°F



Shoveling snow is a cleaner way to manually remove snow and saves money on gasoline.



Read the label of your deicers to ensure they are safe for your furry friends!!

WHERE TO LEARN MORE

Find out more about proper deicing techniques and clean water. The Flathead Lakers offer:

- **Free visit** to explore clean water practices that might work for you;
- **Flathead Clean Water Toolkit website:** information about winter BMPs, soil and water quality: www.flatheadlakers.org/toolkit
- **Walk and Talk Tours** - Meet neighbors and see more lake-friendly practices.

Together, we can keep Flathead Lake blue! Visit the Flathead Lake Clean Water Toolkit:

www.flatheadlakers.org/toolkit or call 883-1341.

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