



Current industry state and managing its challenges. How to prepare yourself and clients for limited salt supply & price increases.

September 2018

During the 2017/2018 winter season the deicing Industry was directly impacted with unexpected circumstances, including ice storms, mine reputed water leaks entangled with labour strikes and contractual obligations to municipalities. This resulted in distribution salt shortages and drastic price increases which unfortunately the industry will continue to experience this upcoming winter.

Being proactive with the current situation is vital in preplanning; as a supplier and for customers. In preparation for the unexpected, The Salt Depot has taken initiative by importing rock salt internationally to ensure adequate inventory levels be available to loyal Salt Depot customers throughout the season. The Salt Depot will continue to offer efficient deicing alternative programs and provide educational knowledge on how and conserve salt, save money while keeping properties clean & safe.

Knowing that price increases are inevitable, and salt supply may be limited, we encourage all our customers to review and discuss contractual obligations with their clients to ensure they understand the current situation and how it will directly affect them.

Below you will find some key industry strategies that will assist in the preplanning process.

EDUCATION & TRAINING:

- Communicate with your clients about what's happening in the industry regarding price increases & limited salt supply. By knowing, is accepting. Work together on customizing contracts to ensure all costs are absorbed accordingly.
- Review contracts carefully with your clients and ensure you are protected for the areas outlined and agreed upon. Manage expectations, as there is a general agreement that because of liability fears there is a great deal of over-use. Inspect the property with the client preferably during a rain event. This will identify problem areas that can be dealt with before winter.
- Offer a **pre-payment program** to ensure deicing products be available when needed.
- Train and educate your operators professionally. Review property areas carefully and discuss adequate deicing product required during application.

CONSERVE:

- **Understanding what, when, where, why and how to salt is key to conserving. It all comes down to employee training, equipment, deicing material, understanding weather patterns and TIMING.**
- **Use treated salt**, as it is more efficient and reduces waste.
- **Use sand & salt mix.** Note: Suggestions on sand/salt management is available.
- Eliminate pre-salting when necessary.
- Work with clients to reduce service areas, as it may not be necessary to treat all areas equally. Close off unused areas that do not need to be plowed and/or salted.
- Develop a menu of service levels. This could reduce salt use considerably.
- Plow more and salt less. Often contractor's salt away accumulated snow when really it should be plowed first.

EQUIPMENT:

- Use “Live Edge” plows
- Integrate the use of liquids
- Calibrate equipment

Important tools & resources:

Landscape Ontario offers a wide range of resources including industry news, examples of contracts, letters for property managers and other important tools that can be presented and used during contract negotiation.

<https://horttrades.com/salt-shortage-resources-page>

In addition, The Salt Depot is readily available to assist and provide support during this critical time. Please contact our sales department for further information and to discuss customized program options best suited for your deicing needs.

Sincerely,
The Salt Depot Management.