



Addressing Winter Salts' Impacts on Water Quality: Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia Activities (as of July 5, 2018)

This is a brief update on state activities to address the issue of salts and their impact on streams, and the salinity of drinking water. While wastewater is also impacted by salts, wastewater is currently not a direct focus of regional planning efforts.

VIRGINIA

- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VA DEQ) plans to have a Salt Management Strategy (SaMS) for Northern Virginia developed within two years (by end of 2019).
- When DEQ issued a chloride TMDL for Accotink Creek in Fairfax County in 2017, DEQ recognizes runoff from winter salt applications is affecting stream and drinking water salinity on a broader scale, and therefore is proactively developing a stakeholder-driven SaMS for the entire northern Virginia, to lessen the effects of deicing/anti-icing salts on stream water quality and drinking water resources.
 - The SaMS can be customized by Accotink Creek MS4s for their TMDL Action Plans.
 - Accotink Creek MS4s include VDOT (Virginia Dept. of Transportation), Fairfax County, City of Fairfax, Fairfax County Public Schools, Vienna, NoVA Community College, and Ft. Belvoir
- In February, DEQ convened a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) to develop the Salt Management Strategy for Northern Virginia.
 - The SAC consists of primarily local governments and VDOT, academics, watershed representatives, and a few property owners/HOAs, salt applicators/contractors. DEQ would like more representatives from these later categories.
 - Heidi Bonnaffon, COG, serves on the SAC
 - The SAC will have the following workgroups:
 - Traditional Best Management Practices- managing the application by departments of transportation and consultants
 - Non-traditional Best Management Practices—i.e. tort legislation
 - Education/outreach
 - Monitoring
 - Salt tracking and reporting
 - Government coordination-impacts on permits, etc.

MARYLAND

- In February, MDE released its draft 2018 Integrated Report, which includes its 303d list of impaired watersheds. For 28 watersheds listed as impaired, MDE stated “salinization of state fresh waters due to road salt application continues to be a major challenge,” noting spikes in stream conductivity, and a decline in aquatic biological communities.
- Since 2017, Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) has had a Salt Management Strategy in place. It is anticipated that plan could serve as a template for local salt management plans that will be required as part of the next generation Maryland MS4 Phase I permits. (In Maryland, all local roads are managed by local government agencies.). The permits will:
 - Require tracking and reporting of salt usage: Amount applied by event or date, monthly/annual ton usage, and per lane mile, per inch of snow.

- Training and outreach component: SHA has an annual “salt academy” for salt personnel and contractors. Developing Best Practices Outreach
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) has been monitoring chlorides at pilot stream sites near road crossings, and should have preliminary data available sometime in 2018
- There is ongoing salt management coordination between MDE, SHA, DNR.
- In addition, the Patuxent Reservoirs Watershed Protection Group (1996) has a workgroup and Technical Advisory Committee for protecting drinking water reservoirs, and has plans to develop a Comprehensive Salt Reduction Plan

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

- DDOT received training by consultant, Diana Clonch, on best management practices for salting, such as:
 - Equipment calibration; measure/apply according to storm; employee accountability; training; pre-treatment and pre-wetting of salt

POTENTIAL COG COORDINATION ROLES

1. Provide coordination between state agencies/local governments in MD and VA and DC
 - Host annually (or biannually) a regional meeting of state highway and environmental agency folks, together with local stormwater, wastewater and drinking water folks, to:
 - Review latest research findings
 - Report about state highway folks on their salt management efforts
 - Share educational/outreach plans and materials
 - Share evaluation and adaptive management strategies
2. Coordinate monitoring efforts across the region (either via current monitoring efforts or new sites).

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