

SALT REDUCTION WORKGROUP

- Minutes -

Tuesday, September 26, 2006

9:30 to 11:30 am

Londonderry Municipal Buildings

268 B Mammoth Road

Londonderry, N.H.

ATTENDEES:

Janos Czyzowski, DPW	Town of Londonderry	Pam Mitchell	N.H. DOT
Russell Pickering, DPW	Town of Londonderry	Butch Knowlton	N.H. DOT
John Trottier, DPW	Town of Londonderry	Caleb Dobbins	N.H. DOT
Alan Cote, DPW	Town of Derry	Doug Heath	EPA
Rick Russell, DPW	Town of Salem	Myra Swartz	EPA
David Poulson, DPW	Town of Windham	David Preece	Southern N.H. RPC.
Jack McCartney, Highway	Town of Windham	Steve Williams	Nashua RPC
Michael Dross, DPW	Town of Auburn	Minda Henderson	Nashua RPC
Rob Brown, DPW	Town of Chester	Cliff Sinnott	Rockingham RPC
Paul Currier	N.H. DES	Steve Kahl	Plymouth State Univ.
Phil Trowbridge	N.H. DES	Dari Sasson	Plymouth State Univ.
Barbara McMillan	N.H. DES	Bill Archieri	VHB
Eric Williams	N.H. DES	Bill O'Donnell	Federal Highway Admin.
Bill Cass	N.H. DOT	Robert Roseen	UNH Stormwater Center
Mark Hemmerlein	N.H. DOT		

Invited but unable to attend

Londonderry Board of Selectman
Dave Sullivan, Windham Town Administrator
Derry Board of Selectman
Salem Board of Selectman
Auburn Board of Selectman
Chester Board of Selectman
Kathy DesRoches, UNH T2 Center

MEETING MINUTES

Overview of the 401 Water Quality Certificate and Memorandum of Agreement between the N.H. Department of Environmental Services (DES) and the N.H. Department of Transportation (DOT)

Paul Currier, P.E., DES and Bill Cass, DOT gave an overview of the history of the MOA and an introduction to why we are here (presentation attached).

Chloride Total Maximum Daily Load Studies in the Interstate 93 Corridor

Phil Trowbridge, P.E., DES gave a presentation and addressed questions on the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies (presentation attached).

Tools for towns to maintain or reduce salt loadings

Pam Mitchell, N.H. DOT, District 5 gave an overview of the N.H. DOT policies to reduce salt loadings on New Hampshire State Roads including: The NHDOT Winter Road Maintenance Policy, suggested application rates, no black road policy, anti icing, driver training, spot check trucks for lane miles, weekly salt reports, and calibrated ground-speed-corrected trucks. New tools discussed by Pam included: pre-treat techniques, pavement monitors, under body plows, calibrators, and pre-wetting. Discussion and questions ensued regarding vehicle washing and changing salt applications for varying grades, using brewing by-products, studies on accident rates, and studies on using a sand-salt mix. Communities expressed concerns about lack of applicability of DOT practices to town roads due to differences in road conditions, equipment, temperature, speed, and staff.

Discussion

After the presentations, the workgroup discussed many topics related to road salt and winter road maintenance. The points could generally be grouped into two classes: Barriers or concerns about reducing salt application; and possible solutions. The main points from the discussion are summarized below.

Barriers/Concerns:

- Selectmen, legislators and the governor need to be interested and involved in the decision making process regarding road salt reductions.
- Road salt does not rise to the level of a ‘critical issue’ for towns.
- Towns may feel that reducing road salt use is an unfunded mandate.
- Groundwater is not included in the TMDL studies.
- Towns have contracts with private trucks for maintenance. They have little control over contracted equipment.
- Messages have not been consistent.
- There are multiple audiences and players that need to be on-board, i.e., selectmen, police, decision makers, and the driving public.
- Commuters want to go to work quickly in all weather conditions. Need help in changing culture of drivers – behavior modification.
- Safety Services (Police/Fire) demand road salting during storms after any accident. They expect a black road policy. Need to bring this group into the discussions about road salt reductions.
- Fear of lawsuits for private companies. They would rather violate water quality than be sued for negligence.
- People cannot picture the loss of habitat caused by the road salt.

Possible Solutions:

- Get the Planning Board to use LID for future growth. Slowing the growth of impervious surfaces will slow the salt usage.
- Provide ideas for towns for this winter. Keep track of salt usage. Consider new warrants or ordinances for salt applicators to be registered with the town.
- Incorporate newspaper coverage/press releases and include feedback from Workgroup.
- Use CTAP group to slow development – address related ordinances etc.
- Use MS4 as a regulatory force for change. Having an impaired waterbody affects the MS4 permittees immediately. May have to get EPA to enforce this permit.
- Increase town budgets for road maintenance. Better roads need less salt because they can be scraped clear of snow without salt.
- Consider reduced salt areas on roads to motivate drivers to slow down.
- Educate vendors of water softeners.

- Plan future development with less pavement. UNH is looking at pilot study with porous asphalt in parking lots and using less chloride.
- Use information from Windham survey/synopsis for municipal salt use from a few years ago to create implementation plans based on what each town needs. Know individual situations.
- Document the degraded water quality and loss of habitat in the streams so that the public can understand.
- Use the data from the TMDL to develop a predictive model of chloride loads by land use type that could be used to forecast future chloride loads or chloride loads in other southern NH watersheds.
- Develop clear recommendations for groundwater infiltration. So far, DES feels that source reduction is the best and that increasing recharge is the best option on balance.

Schedule for future meetings, charge to the workgroup

The next meeting will be scheduled for the full Workgroup in March, 2007. There was much discussion regarding losing momentum in the mean time and how to use the Workgroup in-between meetings. Ideas for agenda items for March include:

- How does this affect MS4 programs? – Coordinate with EPA
- New products
- Warrant articles