



SCOPE

Applies to snow and ice control products that can be used as an alternative to sodium chloride (salt) for deicing walkways, sidewalks, parking lots, bridges, streets, and roadways.

REQUIREMENTS

Snow and ice control products such as deicers and anti-icers purchased by the District of Columbia shall meet the environmental criteria defined below.

Snow and ice control products shall be certified to at least one (1) of the following standards, using the most recent version in effect at the time of the purchase:

- [Safer Choice](#)
- [USDA's BioPreferred® Program](#)
- [Clear Roads](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Road salt corrodes vehicles, bridges, and other metal structures, and its accumulation and persistence pose a risk to water quality and the plants, animals, and humans who depend on the water. In bodies of water, such as lakes, rivers, and local ponds, salt run-off raises the salinity of the water while reducing dissolved oxygen levels, creating conditions that may negatively impact native wildlife. In the soil, salt primarily causes dehydration which leads to foliage damage, and also causes osmotic stress that harms root growth. Particularly high concentrations of sodium and chloride may be found in snow melt, which many animals drink to relieve thirst, potentially causing salt toxicity including dehydration, confusion and weakness, among other symptoms, [according to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Sciences](#).

Biobased deicers and anti-icers can be generated as byproducts of agricultural operations like sugar beet refining or ethanol production and used to reduce the use of salts ([BioPreferred.gov](#)).

ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIFICATION GUIDANCE FOR SNOW & ICE PRODUCTS

*The District of Columbia is committed to procuring quality goods and services in a timely manner and at a reasonable cost that support the District in meeting its sustainability goals. Compliance with specification guidance is sufficient to meet PPRA Section 1101 (a) environmentally preferable procurement requirements. The supplemental recommendations, although recommended, are not required for compliance with PPRA 1101 (a). **To access full contract language, [click here](#).***



SIGNIFICANCE TO THE DISTRICT

- [PPRA §104](#) specifies products that meet Default Environmental Standards (DES). The U.S. EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines recommend use of private sector standards/ecolabels when purchasing deicer or any services that involve the use of deicer. [The EPA Comprehensive Guidelines](#) are a DES.
- [Sustainable DC 2.0 Plan](#) Nature Goal 1: "Protect, restore and expand aquatic ecosystems" emphasizes safeguarding water quality in DC's streams, rivers, ponds, and wetlands. Biobased deicers (e.g., derived from sugar beet or ethanol byproducts) and EPA Safer-Choice- certified products are less corrosive and less harmful, helping to prevent salt contamination in waterways.

BENEFITS

86,000

Gallons of brine and beet juice mixture are sprayed in the District before snow and precipitation begins

\$5 Billion

is the estimated cost of annual repairs in the U.S. due to the corrosive effects of rock salt deicers and anti-icers

SOURCES

<https://snow.dc.gov/page/equipment-and-deicer-supplies>

<https://www.epa.gov/snep/winter-coming-and-it-tons-salt-our-roads>

For more information about sustainable specification guidance or the District's Sustainable Purchasing Program, please visit <https://doee.dc.gov/service/sustainable-purchasing> or email sppdc@dc.gov.