

# Chloride (salts)

## IMPACTS:

Ecology & Economy

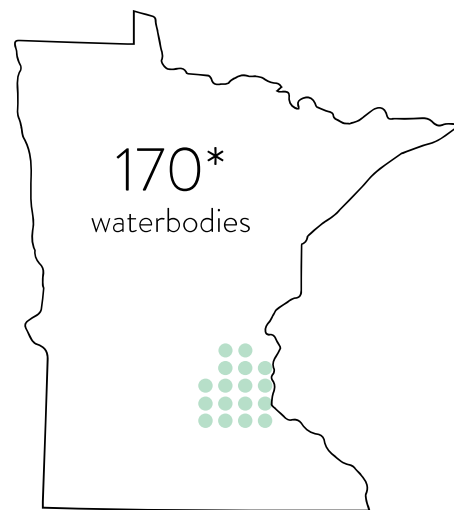


## WATER QUALITY STATS

**50 lakes and streams** in Minnesota are impaired by too much salt.

**120 water bodies** are threatened by salt.

**30% of shallow groundwater wells** in the Twin Cities metro area have elevated chlorides.

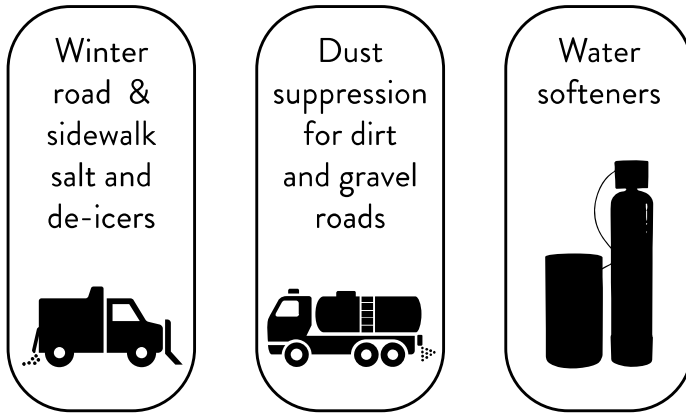


\* 1 dot represents 10 waterbodies

**SALTS** are used to melt snow and ice during the winter, suppress dust on gravel roads, and soften water. But, salt has become a major source of water pollution in Minnesota – especially in the Twin Cities metro area.

Salt kills fish and aquatic life, corrodes roads and bridges, and can even harm wildlife and our pets. We currently have no practical technology to remove salt from surface or groundwater once it is there. It takes only one teaspoon of salt to permanently pollute five gallons of freshwater.

# COMMON SOURCES



## SUMMARY

Chloride (salt) is a major source of water pollution in Minnesota, especially in urban areas. Salt permanently pollutes surface water and groundwater and harms fish and wildlife.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. **Slow down.** Leave early, drive slower, and give plow trucks plenty of space to do their work.
2. **Be patient.** Just because you don't see salt on the road doesn't mean it hasn't been applied. Salt takes time to work.
3. **Shovel first.** Whether you use a shovel, snow blower, snow plow, or ice scraper, get out there as early as you can to shovel your driveway and sidewalk. The more you shovel, the less salt you'll need.
4. **Use salt wisely.** A 12 oz. mug of salt is enough for 10 sidewalk squares or a 20' driveway. Clean up leftover salt and sand to save and reuse. Salt does not melt ice when it is colder than 15° F. Wait until it warms up to avoid wasting money.