

A little salt goes a long way.

Starting with the first snowfall of the year and continuing throughout the winter months, [*insert your county, state*] relies on road salt (sodium chloride) to reduce snow and ice accumulation on our roadways. As a nation, we use roughly 20 million pounds of road salt per year. The vast majority of this salt gets washed into local streams and rivers, causing potentially dangerous spikes in salt levels.

Increased salt levels in our streams can corrode pipes, harm our pets, and reduce the amount of clean water available to fish and wildlife. Many of us (more than 118 million Americans) also depend on local streams for our drinking water. Water treatment plants are not equipped to filter out excess salt, so that salt can end up in our tap water, which can cause health concerns for people with high blood pressure.

I am not saying that we should stop using road salts entirely. Traveling safely is important to all of us. However, we need to ensure efforts to keep our roads safe do not destroy water quality in the process. Government officials and community members need to work together to limit salt use on roads and sidewalks, find alternatives to road salts, and stop the pollution of our nation's streams and rivers.

For more information about road salts, please visit iwla.org/saltwatch.