

Horticultural Review – October 2011 - Hodgins

Contracts require Smart about Salt Certification

Bob Hodgins, Executive Director, Smart About Salt Council

Winter is only 4 or so months long but those who work in the snow and ice business think about it most of the year. As the 2011-2012 snowfighting season approaches a lot is being done to get ready. Good planning and preparation are essential to making the best of the season. Most of us are looking forward to – well maybe dreading is a better word- closing our pools, putting away the lawn furniture and golf clubs, digging up our gardens, getting our winter clothes and equipment out of mothballs and finding our snow tires. But not the winter guys! They are gearing up for winter.

Now is the time to bid on contracts, get snow clearing equipment ready, hire and train snowfighter crews and secure a reliable supply of deicing materials. With respect to the later point it will be interesting to see how the tornado damage to the Sifto salt plant in Goderich will affect this year's supplies. The company's Kansas based parent's website said they "fully intend to meet 100 percent of our highway deicing salt commitments" – so time will tell. This would be an excellent time to Smart About Salt practices.

We at the Smart About Salt (SAS) Council are busy most of the year but things have been particularly busy through August and September. GO Transit has begun the first steps to becoming "Smart About Salt". Earlier this month their latest contracts for snow and ice control services were tendered – calling for contractors to commit to becoming Smart About Salt Certified. The tender requires bidders to register their intent to become Smart About Salt Certified. This can be done through our website www.smartaboutsalt.com. The second requirement is for the successful contractors to become Smart About Salt Certified by next spring. The registration process has gotten pretty active.

At the same time the City of Woodstock has required its contractors to be Smart About Salt certified and to take the SAS training program. The City of Ottawa is also getting Smart About Salt – on September 7th the Transportation Committee of the City of Ottawa approved the following motion:

That the Transportation Committee recommend to Council that the City of Ottawa continue to illustrate environmental leadership and stewardship by:

- a. working closely with the provincial Smart About Salt Council;*
- b. adopting staff training programs to encourage smart salt practices for city parking lots and public facilities;*
- c. phasing in a requirement for City contractors to be certified in smart salt usage;*
- d. hosting a public-private Smart Salt Summit in the Fall of 2011 to share best practices in salt management with BOMA and other local public institutions;*
- e. providing information for residents on the City website for smart salt usage for residents and private property.*

All of this interest has triggered training courses in Milton (August), Kitchener (September) and Ottawa (October) – with more to come. People can check out the available training through the Events page of the website and register online for one of the training courses.

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Keep an eye on this spot for future commentary on salt management. If there are specific topics you would like covered, email smartaboutsalt@bell.net. Enjoy the lead-up to winter!



Winter Salt Management Program

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