



GEORGINA

**THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWN OF GEORGINA**
Georgina Environmental Advisory Committee Addendum Agenda

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

7:00 PM

Pages

8. SPEAKERS

- *2. Speaker Regarding Notice of Motion, Salt Management 2
Susan Sheard and MJ Hanley to speak on Notice of Motion.

12. GENERAL INFORMATION ITEMS

- *2. Council Notice of Motion; From Councillor Neeson regarding Salt Management 22

For Committee discussion and comments.

(Advisement: This Notice of Motion will be discussed by Council at its meeting on April 2, 2025).



SALT FACTS MUNICIPAL CAMPAIGN: GEORGINA, YR

ONTARIO SALT POLLUTION
COALITION, 2024 – 2025

OUR ASK

- **The Town of Georgina** urges the province of Ontario to work urgently with key stakeholders to develop limited liability legislation, including enforceable contractor training and a single set of provincially-endorsed standard BMPs for snow and ice management; and
- **The Town of Georgina** urges the province of Ontario to create and fund an expert stakeholder advisory committee to advise the province and municipalities on the best courses of action to protect freshwater ecosystems and drinking water from the impacts of salt pollution; and
- **The Town of Georgina** commits to the reduction of the use of road salt as much as possible while maintaining safety on roads, parking lots and sidewalks; and
- This resolution be sent to all municipalities in **York Region**, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), local MPPs, Conservation Ontario, Minister Andrea Khanjin (MECP), Interim Minister Todd McCarthy (MECP), Attorney General Doug Downey, and Premier Doug Ford.

ONTARIO LEADS CANADA IN SALT POLLUTION

- Ontario is responsible for 2.2 of the 5 million tonnes of salt applied in Canada.
- “Overall, Chloride concentrations in the streams monitored increased by approximately 2-fold from the 1960s to [2022]”
- “... lakes with the highest Chloride concentrations were commonly situated near urban centres, adjacent to highways, and tended to be in more populated regions of the province.”

WHAT WE ARE DOING ISN'T WORKING

CTC (Credit Valley-Toronto and Region - Central Lake Ontario) Source Protection Region Discussion Paper, March 2024:

- “It is not expected that current salting policies will have a significant impact in reduction of salt trends.”
- “Risk Management Plans to manage the salt issue do not appear to be having the desired effect & take a great deal of municipal resources.”
- “Until incentive programs that reduce liability.....to ensure safety but consider the environment are enacted, no significant change will occur and sodium & chloride in surface and groundwater will continue to rise”.

OPPORTUNITY TO REGULATE SNOW AND ICE MANAGEMENT SECTOR IN ONTARIO

- Roughly 11% of salt is applied by private sector on commercial parking lots (Lake Simcoe)
- Insurance costs are keeping some out of the sector
- Crisis when Town of Blue Mountains got no bids on tender to clear snow and ice
- Ontario appears keen – but moving slowly – we need your help!



Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association · [Follow](#)

November 3, 2023 · 🌐



Representatives of Landscape Ontario's Snow and Ice Sector Group gathered at Queen's Park in Toronto on October 24 to advocate on behalf of those who keep our roads, sidewalks and parking lots safe each winter.

The day was a success, with Premier Doug Ford and ministries across the board showing support to the cause.

The sector group is asking the provincial government to enact a regulatory framework for snow and ice removal to create safer working conditions, foster a mor... [See more](#)



Successful day
for snow and ice
contractors at
Queen's Park

landscapeontario.com
Green for Life!



HORTTRADES.COM

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION LANDSCAPE ONTARIO IS ASKING FOR LIMITED LIABILITY



- A year-round approach that involves removal of hazards before winter.
- “A regulated snow and ice management system supported by a legal framework that protects certified contractors who can prove compliance would allow Snow Management Sector (SMS) operators to make improvements in the management of salt and accompanying environmental concerns.”
- “The changes being sought only create an improved system for site analysis, elimination of hazards, and introduces a requirement for site specific protocols. At the core of the changes being sought is improvement of the procurement process and salt reduction concurrently.”

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION LANDSCAPE ONTARIO IS ASKING FOR LIMITED LIABILITY (2)

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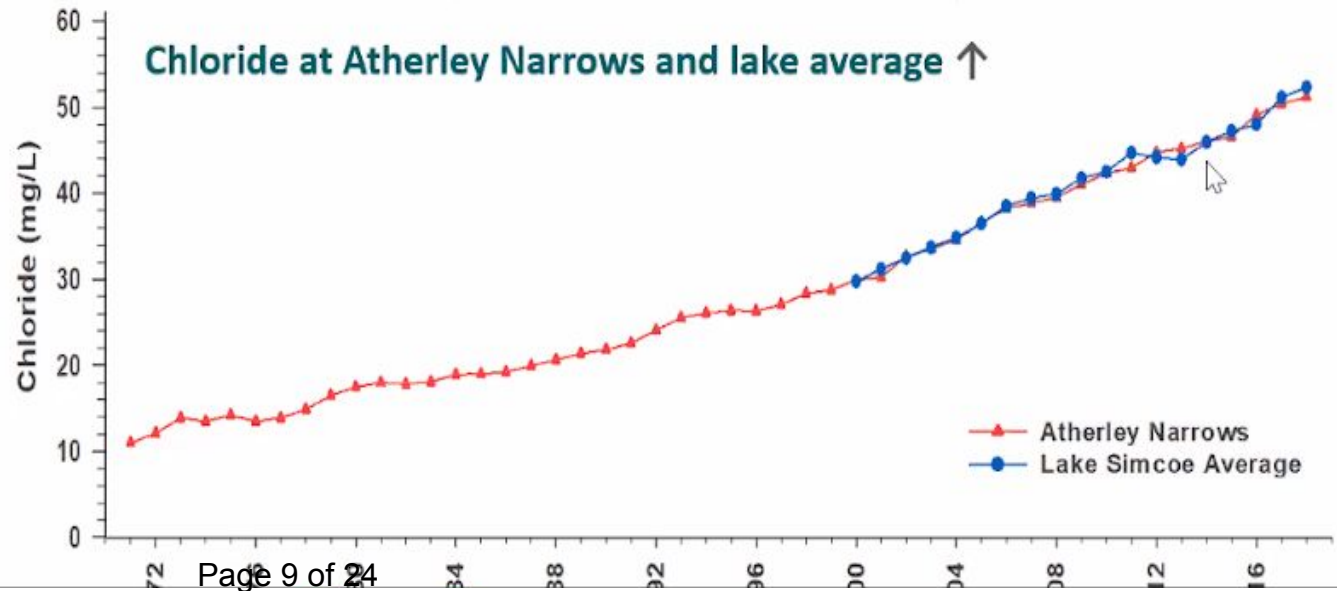
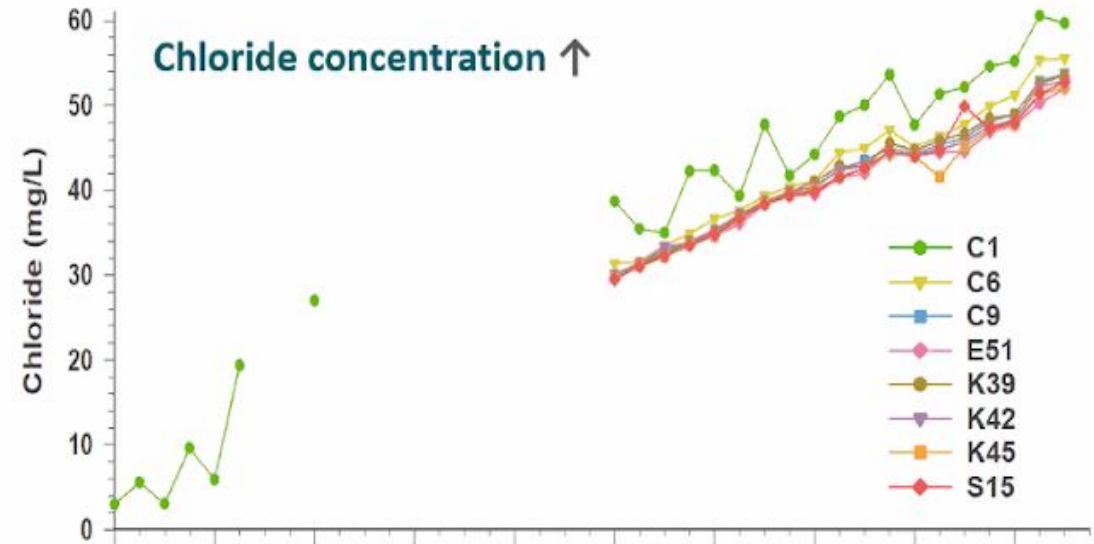
III. Policy Recommendation

Landscape Ontario wishes to achieve the following goals through legislative reform, the establishment of technical standards, and creation of a regulatory framework:

- Create safe conditions for Ontarians while respecting the natural environment;
- Reform the liability system by balancing risk to all involved in site management in winter;
- Establish a regulatory framework for snow and ice management in Ontario;
- Establish the parameters for defining reasonable risk.

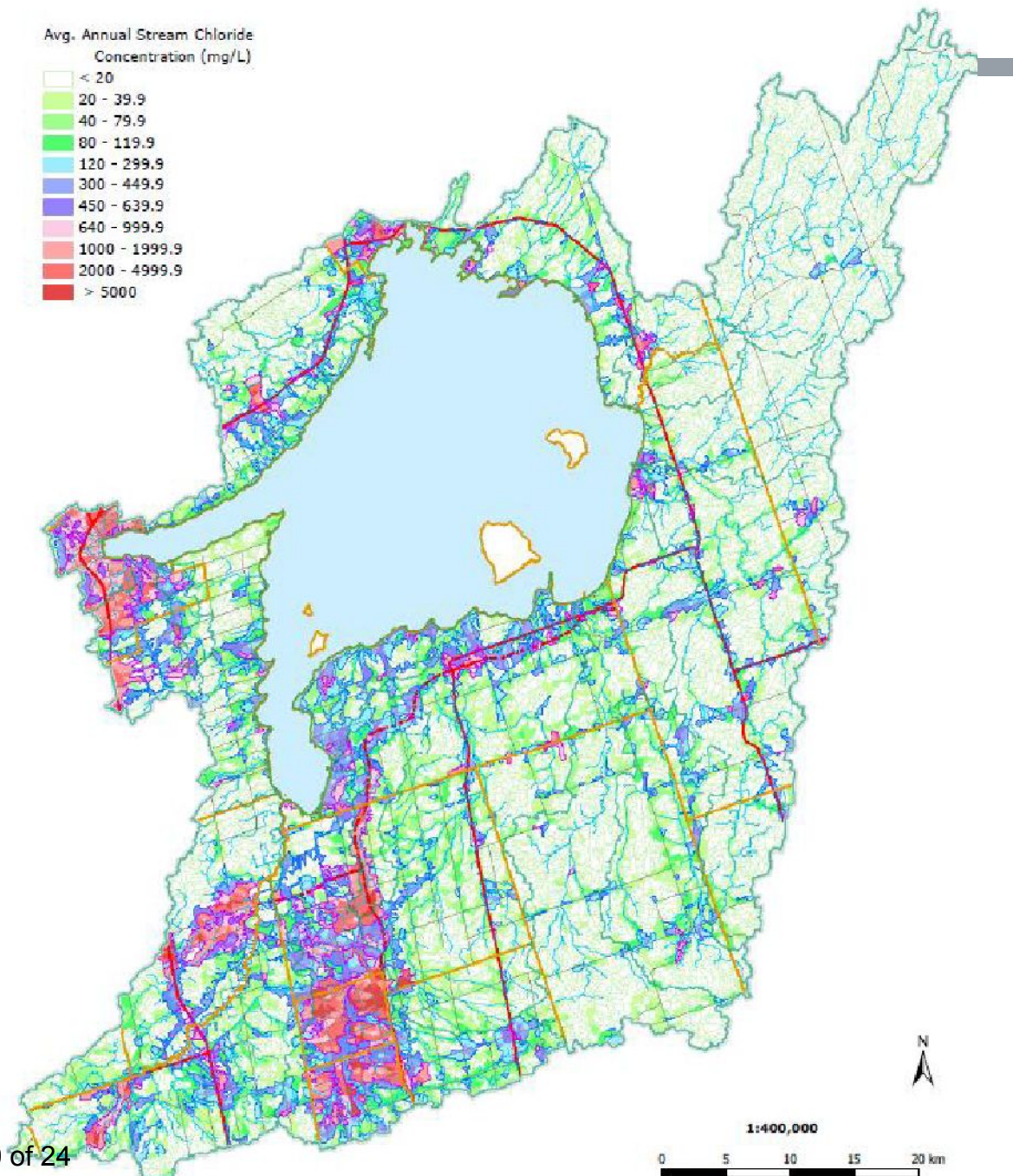
Water quality stressor

- **Chloride** continues to increase
- If recent rate of increase continues, chloride in the lake will reach chronic guideline level of 120 mg/L in 38 years



LAKE SIMCOE WATERSHED SALT VULNERABLE AREAS

- Predicted average annual chloride concentration at the time of "full build-out" in 2031
- Colours lower than bright green here will have an annual average chloride concentration in excess of the chronic exposure guideline for chloride.
- 2015 Study: LSRCA

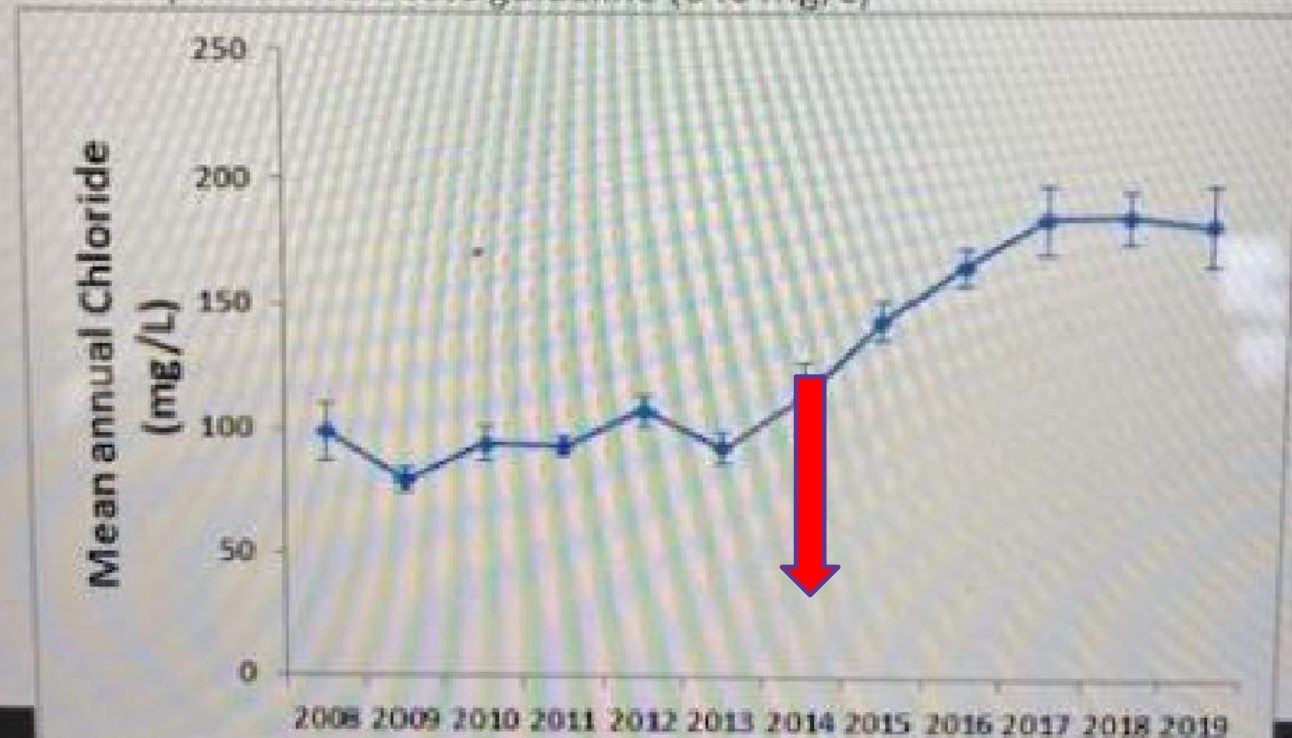


HIGHWAYS ARE SALT HOTSPOTS

- The Maskinonge River is impacted by Highway 404

Water Quality - Chloride (2008-2019)

- Increasing trend
- 42% of samples exceed chronic guideline (120 mg/L)
 - Before 404 Highway extension (2014): 12% exceeded guideline
 - Since 2014: 84% exceed guideline
- No samples above acute guideline (640 mg/L)



2023 Q2 Average Amount of Sodium – Milligrams per Litre

Ansnorveldt	41.7
Aurora	20.7
Ballantrae	11.5
Georgina	34.7
Holland Landing	21.8
Keswick	35.1
King City	27.7
Kleinburg	18.3
Mount Albert	14.9
Newmarket	23.5
Nobleton	15.5
Queensville	20.7
Schomberg	21.5
Stouffville	53.5
York Water System — Vaughan	25.9
York Water System — Richmond Hill	16.0
York Water System — Markham	15.8

*The York Water System receives water from Peel Region and the City of Toronto.

IMPACTS ON DRINKING WATER

- Georgina, Holland Landing and Keswick are already at a level of chloride that must be reported to Medical Officer of Health
- At 20 mg/L the Region must notify physicians who will notify their patients
 - High salt levels are a problem for those with severe hypertension, have congestive heart failure, or are on a sodium-restricted diet



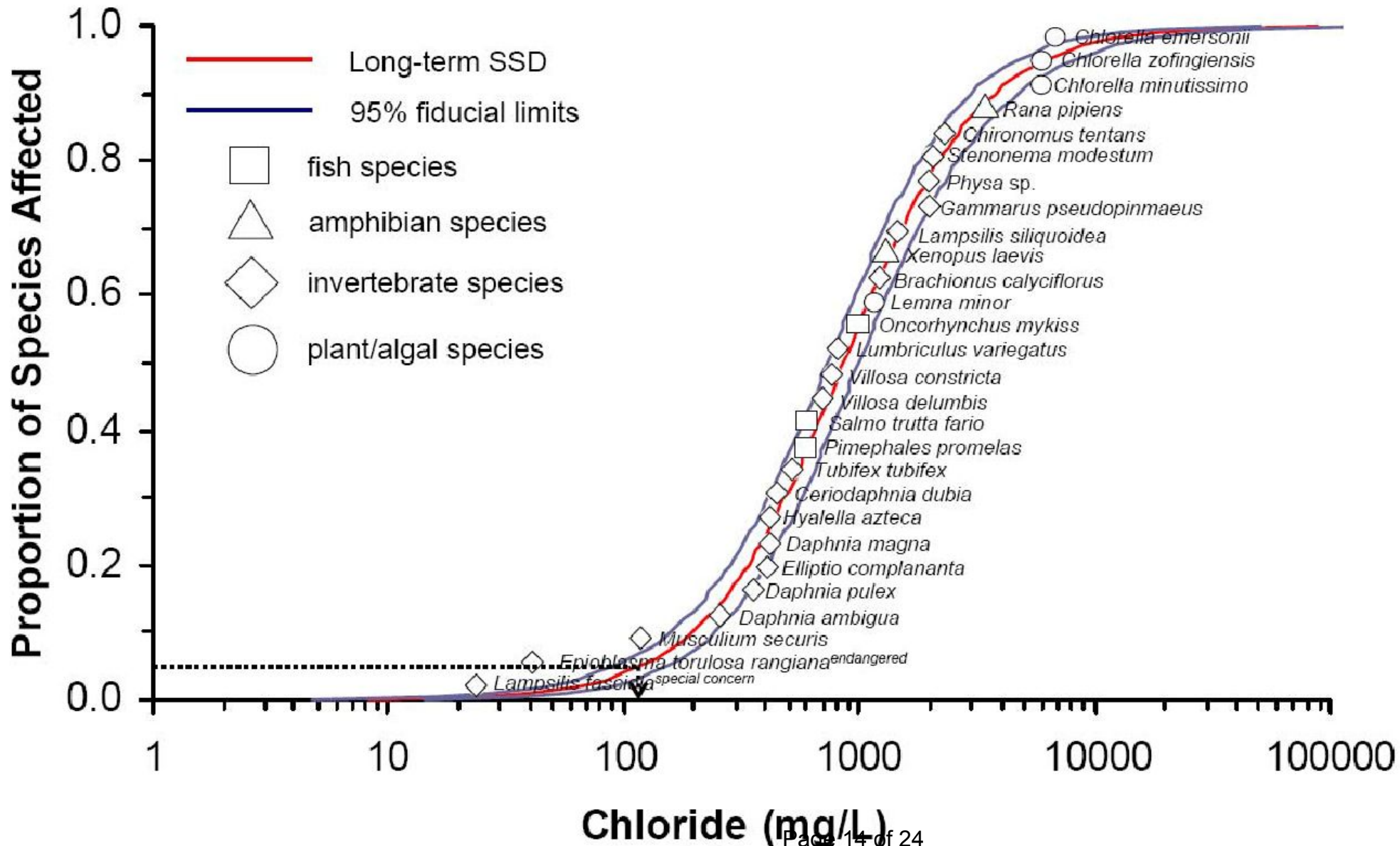
Government
of Canada

Environment and Natural Resources 2001 Assessment Report of Road Salts

“....it is clear from available information that there is a reasonable probability that road salts may be having an immediate or long-term harmful effect on some Canadian surface water organisms, terrestrial vegetation and wildlife and may also constitute a danger to the environment on which life depends through its impacts on aquatic systems and soils and terrestrial habitats.”

“Thus, road salts that contain inorganic chloride salts should be considered "toxic" under CEPA* 1999 because of tangible threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage.”

* Canadian Environmental Protection Act



The Canadian Water Quality Guideline says most aquatic life is protected below 120 mg/L of Chloride

BUT 5 LOCAL SPECIES OF *DAPHNIA* PROVED THE GUIDELINE WAS SUSPECT FOR THE SOFT WATER OF MUSKOKA LAKES



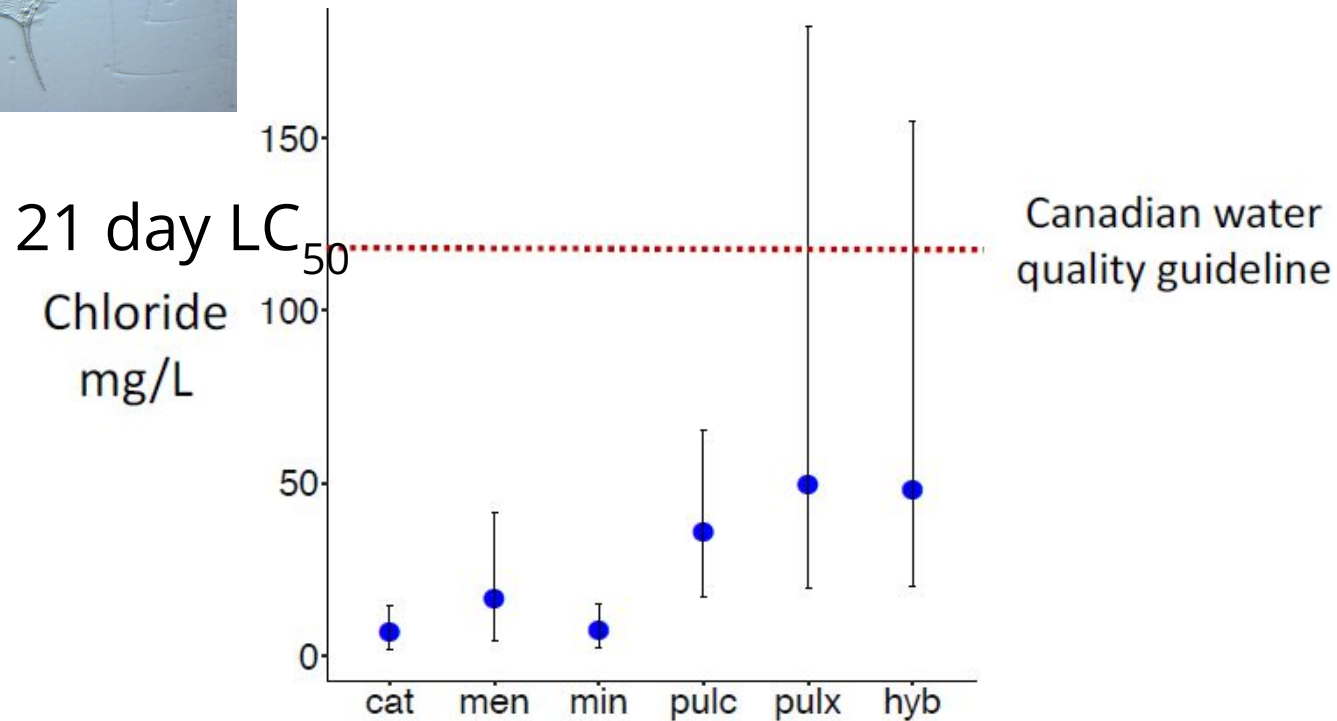
Research conducted by:




Dr. Arnott



Dr. Delis-Salgado



 = Daphnia species that die at Chloride levels below the Canadian Water Quality Guideline in the soft water of Muskoka lakes.

HIDDEN COSTS OF SALT

- Public infrastructure
- Fresh water for recreation, swimming, commercial uses
- Freshwater for drinking
- Aquatic life & food chain effects
- Boots and paws
- Cars



One of the cities libraries entrances. Salt plays a role in this



THANK YOU

SUSAN SHEARD AND MJ HANLEY, RESCUE LAKE SIMCOE COALITION FOR THE ONTARIO SALT POLLUTION
COALITION [HTTPS://SALTCOALITION.CA/](https://saltcoalition.ca/)

BACKGROUND

ON THE NEED FOR PROVINCIAL ACTION ON SALT POLLUTION FROM ROAD SALT

[See adjoining draft municipal resolution here](#)

Effects of Salt

1. Ontario uses more than 2 million tonnes/yr of road salt (sodium chloride) to manage snow and ice on provincial highways, regional public roads and public and private local roads, sidewalks and parking lots
2. Sodium and chloride concentrations in many of Ontario's groundwater aquifers are steadily rising, with some locations exceeding permissible levels for sodium and chloride in drinking water, requiring mandatory source water protection action under the Ontario *Clean Water Act* (2006)
3. Chloride concentrations in many of Ontario's creeks, rivers and lakes are steadily increasing, with some locations exceeding Canada's (CCME) chronic toxicity levels for aquatic life. During winter months, waterways in Ontario cities can approach ocean-level salinity readings
4. Different types of lakes (eg soft water vs. hard water) respond differently to salt, meaning chloride toxicity thresholds for aquatic life will differ between water bodies and watersheds
5. Road salt is also a corrosive agent, damaging infrastructure such as bridges, walkways, surfaces and pipes
6. Ontario's rapid population growth, increased urbanization and road construction, and changing weather patterns (more freeze-thaw cycles) will accelerate salt usage and accelerate these impacts to surface water, drinking water and infrastructure

Earlier Government Actions

7. Ontario has had long-standing drinking water aesthetic objectives for chloride of 250 mg/l max and for sodium of 200 mg/l max (notify Medical Officer of Health if sodium > 20 mg/l)
8. In 2001, the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) declared salt a toxic substance "because of tangible threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage"
9. In 2004, CCME established a voluntary Code of Practice for the Environmental Management of Road Salt
10. In 2011, CCME established a Canadian Water Quality Guideline on chloride loads for Freshwater Aquatic Life of 120 mg/l max (long term) and 640 mg/l max (short term)
11. In 2011, Ontario Ministry of Environment published voluntary guidelines on snow disposal and de-icing operations in Ontario
12. In 2018, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario report "Back to Basics" listed four recommendations to reduce pollution from road salt: researching alternatives, requiring municipal salt management plans, certification of contractors, and liability protection
13. In 2018, Ontario proposed a Made-in-Ontario Environmental Plan that included an action to "build on the ministry's monitoring and drinking water source protection activities to ensure that environmental impacts from road salt use are minimized." This included the commitment to "Work with municipalities, conservation authorities, the private sector and other partners to promote best management practices, certification and road salt alternatives"
14. In 2020, the Freshwater Round Table, consisting of a very broad range of stakeholders, issued a discussion paper "Road Salt Use on Commercial Properties" recommending a single set of BMPs, a training and certification program, regulations to limit winter maintenance contractor liability, and media/public education

15. In 2021, the Canada-Ontario Great Lakes Agreement obligated Ontario to implement various actions related to road salt, including minimizing salt usage, certification and alternatives for public and private salt applicators, assessing pathways for and prevention of road salt into groundwater, and developing site-specific guidelines for areas with salt-sensitive species
16. In 2022, Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks held a workshop on road salt use and management in Ontario, including discussion of best management practices, but there has been no followup on these initiatives;

Current Status

17. Numerous compilations of best practices have been developed (Transportation Association of Canada, Conservation Ontario, TRCA, Smart About Salt), but need to be compiled into one single set of provincially-endorsed BMPs that identify a reasonable standard of care that contractors and municipalities can rely on to address current liability issues
18. Many Ontario municipalities have Salt Management Plans, but these often require updating in the light of improved science and better management practices now available.



ISSUE OVERVIEW





Ontario freshwater ecosystems and drinking water sources are facing growing, dangerous, and chronic salt pollution. Ontario is Canada's #1 user of winter salt, dumping approximately 2-3 million tonnes of salt each winter. Road salt is a known toxic substance designated under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act because of tangible threats including serious, irreversible environmental and public health damages. Other impacts to critical public infrastructure (roads, bridges, buildings) and private property are also a concern.

Currently, there are no provincial policies or regulations for road salts, including no salt use standards, required training, enforcement mechanisms, or protections against salt pollution. This policy void has created liability issues for snow and ice management contractors and has left municipalities out in the cold to deal with salt pollution issues locally. People across Ontario are coming together to work together toward provincial action on salt pollution.

POLICY SOLUTION

'Limited Liability' is a policy approach to winter salt management used in similar jurisdictions to increase safety outcomes and reduce environmental harms.

Limited Liability Legislation includes:

-  Required Contractor Training
-  A Single Set of Provincially-Endorsed Best Management Practices & Standards
-  Legislation Limiting Snow & Ice Management Contractor Liability
-  Establishing a Provincial Regulatory Authority

POLICY BRIEF

Supporting the need for provincial action on salt pollution in Ontario

Developed by the
Ontario Salt Pollution Coalition



KEY ACTION

Municipalities and other governing bodies concerned with salt pollution pass a resolution:

- 1) affirming the need for provincial action on salt pollution
- 2) urging the province to form and fund an expert stakeholder committee to inform salt pollution action
- 3) recommitting to reduce their use of road salts locally

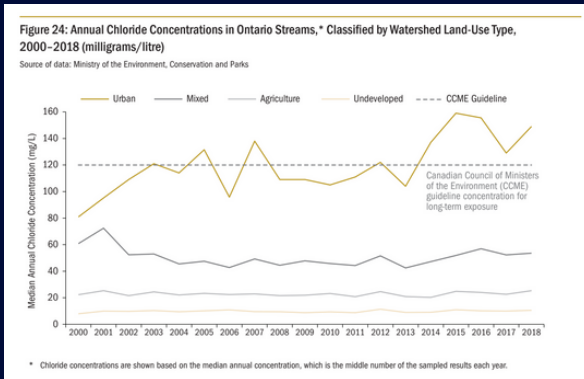
DRAFT MUNICIPAL RESOLUTION

Salt pollution needs a provincial-level solution to make meaningful, long-term strides to reduce water, land, and human health impacts.

Municipalities and other governing bodies concerned with salt pollution play a critical role in securing provincial action on salt pollution.

Municipalities are doing the best they can to deal with over-salting and salt pollution in their jurisdictions, but lack the policy and regulatory framework they need to meaningfully protect their local water bodies and drinking water sources. The Ontario Salt Pollution Coalition is working with municipalities to pass resolutions to affirm the need for provincial action on salt pollution.

[View the draft municipal resolution here.](#)



Source: Auditor General's 'The State of the Environment in Ontario' Report (2023).



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

to learn more about salt pollution in the province of Ontario

Take Action

- **OSPC Website:** <https://saltcoalition.ca/>
- **Draft Municipal Resolution:** [see GoogleDoc here](#)
- **OSPC Municipal Resolution Backgrounder:** [see GoogleDoc here](#)

Learn More

- **Smart About Salt Council:** <https://smartaboutsalt.wildapricot.org/>
- **Brief - "Snow & Ice Removal in Ontario: A Call for Change"** (Landscape Ontario, 2023).
- **Report - Good Practices for Winter Maintenance in Salt Vulnerable Areas** (2018).
- **Study - "Chloride trends in Ontario's surface and groundwaters"** (Sorichetti et al. 2022).
- **Watersheds Canada Salt Pollution Blogs:** <https://watersheds.ca/?s=salt>
- **Report - Limited Liability in Ontario** (Landscape Ontario, 2024).
- **Report - The State of the Environment in Ontario** (Ontario's Auditor General, May 2023).
- **Brief - Alternatives to Salt** (Sustainable Technologies Evaluation Program, 2023).

Notice of Motion from Councillor Dave Neeson

Introduced on March 26th, 2025.

To be heard on April 2nd, 2025.

WHEREAS road salt is a known toxic substance designated under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act because of tangible threats of serious and irreversible environmental and public health concerns associated with road salt; and

WHEREAS salt levels in Ontario's groundwater aquifers, creeks, rivers, and lakes have increasingly worsened since the 1970s, seriously affecting municipal drinking water sources and aquatic life; and

WHEREAS Lake Simcoe is our closest freshwater lake and is the 4th largest inland lake within Ontario, host to a number of functions including a biodiverse habitat for over 56 species of fish, the source water for municipal drinking water for hundreds of thousands of residents within the watershed, including 41,000 here in the Town of Georgina, and the many other recreational and commercial functions it serves; and

WHEREAS Lake Simcoe's salinity concentrations have increased over 500% since monitoring began over the past 50 years, with the primary contributor being runoff from the use of salt for winter maintenance; and

WHEREAS the Ontario and Canadian governments have taken many actions over the past 25 years including setting water quality guidelines, developing voluntary codes of practice, signing the Canada-Ontario Great Lakes Agreement, and holding workshops, yet still the salt problem continues to grow; and

WHEREAS numerous situation analyses have recommended salt solutions involving liability protection, contractor certification, government-approved Best Management Practices (BMPs) and salt management plans; and

WHEREAS increased numbers of slip and fall claims, and other injury/collision claims related to snow and ice, are resulting in salt applicators overusing salt beyond levels considered best practices; and

WHEREAS unlimited contractor liability is making it difficult or expensive for snow and ice management contractors to obtain insurance coverage, resulting in contractors leaving the business, thereby making it difficult for municipalities and private owners to find contractors; and

WHEREAS the Snow and Ice Management Sector (SMS) of Landscape Ontario is working with the Ontario government to institute a limited liability regime for snow and ice management, including enforceable contractor training/certification and government-approved BMPs for salt application; and

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WHEREAS many Ontario municipalities have Salt Management Plans, but these often require updating in light of improved science and better salt management practices now available; and

WHEREAS The Town of Georgina shares fifty-two (52) kilometers of beautiful Lake Simcoe shoreline and all 288 square kilometers of the Town of Georgina are encompassed by sub-watersheds that drain into Lake Simcoe; and

WHEREAS road authorities that use salt, such as the Town of Georgina, must abide by, and benefit from, established provincial regulations around snow clearing and maintenance, whereas private contractors only have voluntary programs for salt use for private and commercial property management; and

WHEREAS the Town of Georgina has demonstrated great initiative in salt mitigation efforts including committing to the use of rock salt alternatives, installation of electronic spreader controllers on all material spreading units, reduced application rates when appropriate, use of pre-wet and brine when appropriate, and an updated salt management plan that outlines salt best management practices specific to the Corporation of the Town of Georgina's winter maintenance operations

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. That the Town of Georgina urges the province of Ontario to work urgently with key stakeholders to develop limited liability legislation, including enforceable contractor training and a single set of provincially endorsed standard BMPs for snow and ice management; and
2. That the Town of Georgina urges the province of Ontario to create and fund an expert stakeholder advisory committee to advise the province and municipalities on the best courses of action to protect freshwater ecosystems and drinking water from the impacts of salt pollution; and
3. That the Town of Georgina continues to commit to the reduction of the use of road salt as much as possible while meeting local service levels and maintaining safety on roads and sidewalks; and
4. That a copy of this resolution be sent to all municipalities in York Region, all Lake Simcoe watershed municipalities; The Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation and The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority requesting their endorsement; The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); all Lake Simcoe watershed MPPs; Conservation Ontario; The Ontario Salt

Notice of Motion from Councillor Dave Neeson

Introduced on March 26th, 2025.

To be heard on April 2nd, 2025.

Pollution Coalition; The Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition; Minister Todd
McCarthy (MECP); Attorney General Doug Downey, and Premier Doug Ford.