

Salt Institute Newsletter (SHD) Fourth Quarter 2011

## Falling snow, rising expectations -- even in the South

In the Sun Belt, people used to understand that heavy snow and treacherous ice were relative rarities. When storms did happen, citizens realized that snow removal and deicing took much longer for transportation agencies that lacked the equipment and staff to deal with more than a few inches.

That has changed. Even in the South, people now expect roads to be swiftly cleared of snow and ice. In northern climates, expectations have always been high, but are getting even higher as citizens realize impassable roads are not only a safety concern but an economic worry.

That realization is backed up by solid research. Just one day of impassable roads can cost a state hundreds of millions of dollars, according to an [economic impact study](#) conducted by IHS Global Insight for the American Highway Users Alliance. The potential loss far outweighs an investment in road salt, snow plows and other resources.

Georgia got a painful demonstration last January when a snowstorm featuring a nasty coating of ice shut down roads and businesses in the metro region for five days.



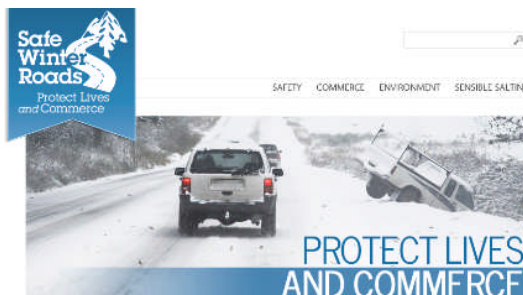
"We generally get one like that every 15 years or so," says Bill Shelton, road maintenance division manager of suburban Cobb County, near Atlanta. "That has prompted us to buy more equipment and to prepare more for an event like that. I use the analogy of buying insurance. You hope you never need it, but we found out last year that we do."

Smart salt use is one of the most effective ways to keep winter roads open and safe. But you have to have a distribution system that gets salt from storage to roads as quickly as possible. This year, instead of storing their salt in just one location, Shelton has spread it out to five spots throughout the county for easier access to its 2,500 miles of roads.

"In traffic, we can lose an hour trying to mobilize," says Shelton. "This will hopefully cut that down to 15 minutes. You learn from your experience and last winter everyone learned a lot. I'm going to use anybody's idea that improves our efficiency and meets the expectation of our taxpayers."

[Read a longer version of this article in the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel](#)

## New website promotes safe winter roads



As ice and snow blanket U.S. highways this winter, motorists, snowfighters, public officials and journalists can turn to a new website that promotes the benefits of safe winter roads – protecting lives and commerce. Safe Winter Roads ([safewinterroads.org](http://safewinterroads.org)) was launched Nov. 2 with a focus on two troubling statistics:

- More than 116,000 Americans are injured and 1,300 killed every year on snowy or icy pavement.
- Snowstorms cost states as much as \$700 million per day if roads become impassable.

“When a snowstorm hits, it’s more than just an inconvenience to motorists,” said Lori Roman, president of the Salt Institute, which created the new site. “Lives are at risk if drivers must travel roads that are inadequately salted and cleared. State and local economies take big hits as commerce slows to a winter crawl.”

In a home-page video that can be embedded on other sites, Salt Institute Vice President Morton Satin, “The Salt Guru,” visits a salt storage facility to explain how salt is not only about safety, but “dollars and common sense.” He also emphasizes the need for best practices that protect the environment. The Salt Guru video touting “sensible salting” is also on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...).

The new website has sections on [safety](#), [commerce](#), the [environment](#) and sensible [salting](#), defined as “the right amount in the right place at the right time.” It packages this information in ways most relevant to the four target audiences: [motorists](#), [snowfighters](#), [public officials](#) and [media](#). Also connect with [Safe Winter Roads on Facebook](#).

[Go to safewinterroads.org](http://safewinterroads.org)

## Excellence in Storage winners: don’t be modest

Are you one of the Salt Institute’s 159 Excellence in Storage winners this year? If so, have you “tooted your own horn” yet?



December is a great time to get the word out about the Salt Institute recognizing your environmental consciousness and effective management in the storage of winter road salt.

To help with promotion, the Salt Institute has created a fill-in-the-blank template for a news release you can use for public relations, as the Village of Hanover, Illinois did here. Send your release to local newspapers, television stations, radio stations, websites and blogs. We also

encourage you to make mention of your award on your organization’s website, in its newsletters and on social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

[Download your news release template in PDF format](#)

Request a news release template in Microsoft Word by emailing [martina@saltinstitute.org](mailto:martina@saltinstitute.org)

[Read a news release announcing Excellence in Storage winners \(PDF\)](#)

## Literature available upon request

The Salt Institute has literature full of practical information that can be mailed to you at a reasonable cost. Resources include:

[The Snowfighters Handbook](#) (27-page booklet)

[The Salt Storage Handbook](#) (24-page booklet)

[Highway Salt and Our Environment](#) (28-page booklet)

[Deicing Salt Facts](#) (4-page article)

[Clear Winter Roads Protect Lives and Commerce](#) (2-page brochure)

To inquire on quantities and cost, contact Martina Sabo, phone, 703.549.4648 or via email, [martina@saltinstitute.org](mailto:martina@saltinstitute.org).

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