

# Reducing Road Salt Through Legislative Reform

Advancing Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship in Ontario



**Landscape Ontario**  
HORTICULTURAL TRADES ASSOCIATION

# The Hidden Costs of Winter Safety

**Environmental Impact:** Road salt (sodium chloride) washes into our rivers, lakes, and groundwater, harming aquatic life and plant ecosystems. It contributes to "freshwater salinization."

**Infrastructure Damage:** Corrosion of concrete, asphalt, and steel, leading to premature aging of roads, bridges, and parking structures.

**Soil & Plant Health:** Salt spray and runoff damage roadside vegetation and can contaminate agricultural soil.

**The Scale of the Problem:** In Canada, an estimated 5 million tonnes of road salt are used each winter.





# Our Mission: A Balanced Approach

We advocate for practices that ensure public safety while protecting our natural environment.

We believe in a shared responsibility model for winter maintenance.

Our goal is to reduce the overuse of road salt through:

- **Legislative Reform:** Seeking balanced liability.
- **Education & Training:** Promoting best management practices and standards.
- **Collaboration:** Working with provincial and municipal governments.





# The Chilling Effect of Liability on Salt Use

Current laws in Ontario often place 100% of the liability for any slip-and-fall incidents on the snow and ice contractor.

This "pass-down" of liability from property owners creates immense pressure on contractors.

**The Result:** Fear of lawsuits leads to the preventative over-application of salt, regardless of weather forecasts or actual need. This is often done to demonstrate "due diligence" in court.





# Building Grassroots Support

Recognizing that change often starts locally, we have actively engaged with municipal councils across Ontario.

Our outreach has focused on educating local governments about the environmental and financial costs of excessive salt use.

**Key Success:** Several municipalities have passed motions supporting our call for provincial action on salt pollution and liability reform.

These motions send a powerful, unified message to the provincial government that this is a critical issue for communities.



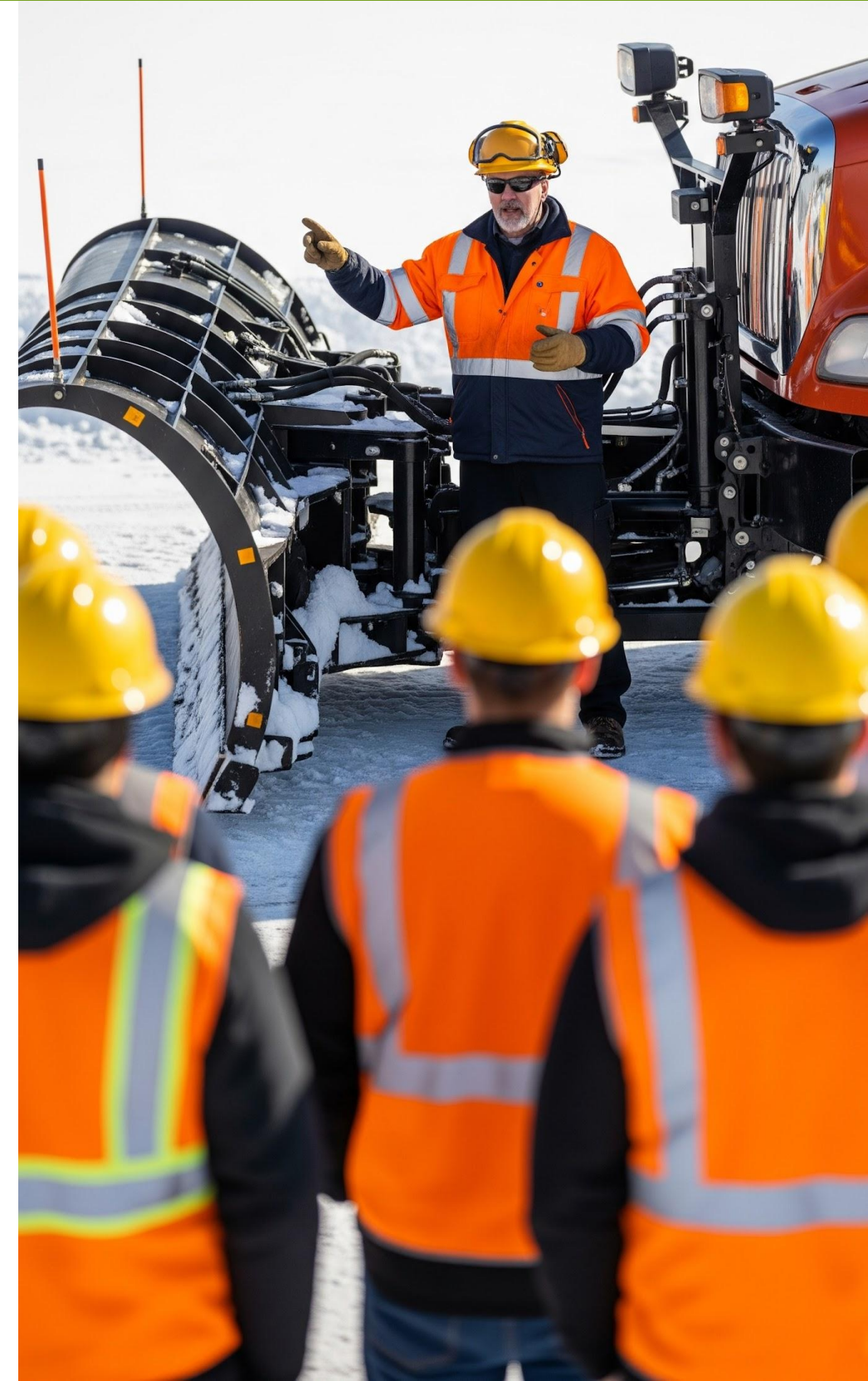


# Training & Accreditation for a New Standard

To ensure best practices are understood and implemented, Landscape Ontario has been a strong supporter and promoter of robust training programs. Developing our own training and accreditation to support a balanced liability framework.

## **Industry developed training & accreditation**

- Train all roles for all staff
- Passport for employee that stays with that person
- Company accreditation for achieving training thresholds





# Celebrating Our Progress

- **Legislative Advancement:** Successful advocacy leading to serious consideration of liability reform at the provincial level.
- **Widespread Municipal Support:** Several municipalities have passed resolutions urging provincial action.
- **Industry Education:** Development of a training and accreditation program, and promotion of other training programs, raising the bar for professionalism in the industry.
- **Public Awareness:** Greater media attention and public understanding of the environmental consequences of road salt.
- **Empowered Contractors:** Providing professionals with the knowledge and tools to reduce salt use confidently.





# Continuing the Momentum

- **Achieving Legislative Victory:** Our primary focus remains on seeing fair liability legislation passed in Ontario.
- **Expanding Our Network:** Engaging more municipalities and conservation authorities to join the cause.
- **Enhancing Training:** Continuously improving and promoting training programs to make sustainable practices the industry norm.
- **Fostering Innovation:** Encouraging the use of new technologies like liquid brines and advanced weather monitoring systems.





# Where do we go from here?

- **Encourage** your local council to pass the same salt pollution motion that several other municipalities have, calling for legislative change at the provincial level
- **Meet** with your MPP and urge them to support this legislative change to protect our environment





# Thank you



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