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March 7, 2022

**Re: SB 240 AAC THE USE OF SODIUM CHLORIDE TO MITIGATE SNOW AND ICE  
ACCUMULATIONS-SUPPORT**

Dear Chairmen Cohen and Gresko and the honorable members of the Environment Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Norwalk River Watershed Association and its over 2000 members and participants. NRWA's mission is to improve the water quality and fish and wildlife habitats of the Norwalk River watershed. The seven watershed towns include Ridgefield, Redding, Wilton, New Canaan, Weston and Norwalk in CT and Lewisboro in NY.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on raised bill SB 240 AAC THE USE OF SODIUM CHLORIDE TO MITIGATE SNOW AND ICE ACCUMULATIONS-SUPPORT.

High salt concentrations due to winter de-icing efforts are an increasing threat to the public water supply and private wells. Rising chloride concentrations are a real and increasing threat to aquatic life in the Norwalk River and to plants and wildlife throughout the watershed. Data shows chloride levels rising dramatically in the Norwalk River as measured in the rate of conductivity and is well documented by Harbor Watch/River Watch with decades of water monitoring. Click [here](#) for a snapshot of this data: [https://norwalkriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Conductivity\\_NorwalkRiver.pdf](https://norwalkriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Conductivity_NorwalkRiver.pdf).

An important transportation corridor (US Rte 7) follows the little Norwalk River. There is extensive commercial development adjacent to Rte 7. Large parking lots and other impervious surfaces, both public and privately owned may be heavily treated with de-icing salts that drain directly into the River.

Roadside soils and wetlands with higher salt concentrations, may not support our native plants. Salty soils may favor and encourage the growth of salt tolerant invasive plants such as phragmites a reed seen growing in great abundance along roadsides and wetlands. These salt damaged roadside

New Canaan, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Wilton, Lewisboro NY

shoulders (and up to 50 feet beyond the roadway) add up to a major loss of habitat that impacts native wildlife.

Evidence of salt damage can be seen with what appears to be burned-out, dead and dying vegetation roadside. Sugar maples, red maples and white pines along heavily salted roads have been significantly impacted, especially those trees downhill, downwind or in areas that have poor drainage.

Green Snow Pro Certification is a real win-win, allowing municipalities and private contractors to save thousands of dollars in reduced salt expenditures while saving our environment and drinking water! Connecticut is a state rich in its supply of fresh water, please help to keep it fresh.

NRWA respectfully asks the Environment Committee to support passage of SB 240, whose purpose is to provide training, certification and protection from liability for applicators of sodium chloride who use best practices when applying sodium chloride.

We ask that the language that pertains to drinking water be broadened generally to surface and groundwater.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Craig  
NRWA Board of Directors

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