



Plan NOW For Next Winter

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As we come to the end of our winter maintenance, many of us forget about our winter work and start right into our busy spring and summer programs. But now is the time to set the standard for next winter season! Now is the time to review the work done last winter season to see which program, equipment, and materials benefited us the most. We may want to change some policies, alter routes to better serve the traveling public, look at new materials to improve level of service, or better justify old material that worked satisfactorily, but may need a new approach which could make it work better and be more effective.

All of these things can affect the preparation of our budget for the coming year. There are many groups and companies that are willing to help us with this research. One of these is the Salt

Institute and they are putting a lot of effort into building programs to train the workforce and provide research articles to keep us informed of new programs that not only keep the transportation system safer and more environmentally friendly for the public, but also save our limited dollars! Excerpt below is one of these research papers from the Salt Institute that may spark a new program or change an old program to make us more effective. Please take a minute to read this article; it is a program that may help us all.

Renfrew County, a large rural jurisdiction near Canada's capital city of Ottawa, has translated its Salt Management Plan (SMP) into a highly successful snow and ice management program. While salt remains one of their best defenses against inclement weather, they have taken a comprehensive approach to managing winter events and the result has been a reduction in winter maintenance costs, collisions, fuel costs and green house gases.

But the program didn't happen overnight. In fact, it has been a team effort over the course of more than 3 years. Each stage of the program required a great deal of research and review to know exactly the situation faced by Renfrew County and how to use that information to create the most effective winter maintenance program possible. Here are the stages they went through to create this program:

1. Salt Management Plan 2001-02
2. Winter Roads Condition model 2001-02
3. Training 2001-02
4. Route Optimization 2002
5. Road Weather Information System (2 of 4 RWIS sites operating) 2003
6. Prewetting started 2003-04
7. Updated Salt Management Plan 2003
8. Revised Operational Plan 2003

You can see the dramatic result in reduced salt use with the Renfrew program in the chart above!

For the complete article and others like it, go to the Salt Institute Web site [www.saltinstitute.org].

Reference: *On The Move, Utah LTAP, Vol. 19, No. 2, Spring 2006*

