



**GREAT LAKES AND
ST. LAWRENCE**
CITIES INITIATIVE



June 2023

A Resolution Submitted by the City of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, QC



Promoting Sustainable Use of Road Salt in Winter Months and Developing Effective Alternatives

WHEREAS, municipalities and the government are relying heavily on road salt to melt snow and ice during winter months to ensure road safety.

AND WHEREAS, according to Environment and Climate Change Canada and the University of Vermont, the United States and Canada combined are using as much as 25 million tons of road salt per year.

AND WHEREAS, road salt, when applied to roads, is carried by stormwater runoff and infiltrate into nearby waterways, including the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin;

AND WHEREAS, accumulation of road salt in freshwater systems can lead to its salinization.

AND WHEREAS, salinization of water can have dramatic consequences on the environment, including degradation of water quality, harm to aquatic life, and loss of biodiversity further preventing ecosystems playing essential role in supporting life.

AND WHEREAS, according to the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, if chloride content exceeds 120 milligrams per litre (mg/L) of water, it can become a chronic issue to water life. If chloride exceeds 640 mg/L, it is categorized as acute, and can severely impact water species immediately.

AND WHEREAS, according to data collected by DataStream, several watersheds in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin exceed 120 mg/L, which can impact aquatic ecosystems.

AND WHEREAS, chloride is not sufficiently monitored all across the basin.

AND WHEREAS, a higher level of chloride in source water entails an increase in water treatment cost for municipalities.

AND WHEREAS, municipalities have a responsibility to protect their water resources and ensure their long-term sustainability for future generations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

- That the Cities Initiative supports the efforts of municipalities to reduce the use of road salt and limit the salinization of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin;
- That the Cities Initiative encourages federal, provincial and state governments to explore alternative strategies for winter road maintenance and management, such as using alternative de-icing materials, adopting more efficient salt application methods, and implementing more comprehensive snow and ice management plans;
- That the Cities Initiative calls upon federal, provincial and state governments to provide financial and technical support to cities and towns for the adoption of alternative winter road maintenance strategies;
- That the Cities Initiative calls upon federal, provincial and state governments to monitor more closely the level of chloride in waterways.
- That the Cities Initiative urges its members to work collaboratively with each other and with other stakeholders, including transportation agencies, environmental organizations, and the public, to develop and implement effective strategies for reducing the use of road salt and protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT copies of this resolution will be distributed, in Canada, to the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Ontario and Quebec ministers of Transport and ministers of Environment; and, in the US, to EPA leadership; state governors and SRF administrators; the Great Lakes Task Forces in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate; and appropriate U.S. congressional committees.