



The Mountain State Greenletter

Volume 14, Issue 1
January 2022

West Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association

Board of Director's Message

We made it through the second year of a pandemic! We hope everyone has had a productive winter so far and you get through the last few months of cold weather. Spring will be upon us before we know it. The Board met a couple weeks ago via a Zoom call and discussed the upcoming year. We are excited to announce we have 5 new members joining the Association and we sent 5 scholarship checks to our returning students from the fall. We will be hosting our Spring meeting at Marietta Country Club on Tuesday, May 10th beginning at 11am. Our Scholarship Fundraiser this year will be held on Monday, June 13th at Bel Meadow Golf Club in Mt. Clare, WV. We are excited for a successful 2022 and we hope you will join us for these two events!

Thank you,
Bobby Cline, CGCS
Guyan G&CC

WVGCSA New Website: www.wvgcsa.org

Upcoming Events:

Spring Meeting @ Marietta CC
Tuesday, May 10th
Lunch and Meeting - 11am
Golf at Noon
Cost - \$40 per person

Scholarship Fundraiser
Monday, June 13th
Bel Meadow Golf Club

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Welcome to our New Members:

- *Brady Hatch, Clarksburg Country Club, Clarksburg, WV*
- *Ben Rigney, Sleepy Hollow Golf Club, Hurricane, WV*
- *Nicholas Bauman, Belmont Hills Country Club, St. Clairsville, OH*
 - *James Burke, Cambridge Country Club, Byesville, OH*
 - *Collin Southern, Sleepy Hollow Golf Club, Hurricane, WV*

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Which Ice Melts are Safest for Turf?

By John Daniels, agronomist, Northeast Region

Keeping clubhouse sidewalks and parking lots clear of snow and ice at this time of year typically falls on the shoulders of course maintenance personnel. The repeated plowing, shoveling and applying salt is something that all of us are very familiar with. What is less intuitive, however, is deciding which ice removal product to use. Not all salts are the same in their performance and their potential to cause harm to surrounding landscapes. Going with one product versus another could be the difference between burnt or green turf along the edge of treated areas come spring.

Sodium chloride, sometimes referred to as rock salt, is generally the least expensive ice melt product and therefore is commonly used on roadways and parking lots. Although it is effective down to 20 degrees Fahrenheit, it is typically not the best choice for areas of your property where overthrow or runoff are possible given its potential to severely damage plants. Take extra care if this is all you have available so that you don't injure your turf or landscape plants.

Magnesium chloride is another common ice melt that can work well down to 0 degrees Fahrenheit. It is less harmful to plants than sodium chloride. However, it can cause significant damage to concrete and result in flaking, crumbling and fracturing. Therefore, many transportation departments have stopped using it so take extra caution with this material.

Potassium chloride is another option that can work down to 25 degrees Fahrenheit. It does not cause as much damage to concrete as magnesium chloride but can cause plant injury if overapplied. When delivered appropriately it generally has a low impact on vegetation. Corrosion to metal is typically of greater concern. Sometimes it is blended with sodium chloride to help lower the product cost and improve the ice melting performance.

Calcium chloride is typically the best choice because it melts ice at very low temperatures, all the way down to -25 degrees Fahrenheit, and is a relatively safe choice for lawns and landscapes when applied appropriately. However, similar to magnesium chloride and potassium chloride, overapplication can result in plant injury. Another thing to keep in mind is calcium chloride is also corrosive, so make sure to rinse those metal banisters.

Calcium magnesium acetate is a fairly safe option for plants that performs best at temperatures of 20 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. On the downside, it is one of the pricier options and can negatively impact aquatic life. Most of the time it is sold as a blend.

Regardless of which salt option you choose, I recommend pretreating your sidewalks and parking lots so you don't have to use as much material. This will reduce costs and lessen the risk of damage to turf and other plants. Trying to melt ice after things have been compacted and frozen is difficult and can require much more salt.

Finally, if you are looking to use the safest after-the-storm material for turf, stick with sand. The particles will aid in traction without causing any harm to plants. Plus, it's a great way to get rid of that old bunker or topdressing sand you have lying around.



There are many different salt options when it comes to ice melts, some are safer than others.



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