

The Town of Lancaster Highway Department has been involved in an ice control program that utilizes an approach/product to keep the roads clear. The Department has been using an environmentally friendly deicing liquid to treat their salt, called Magic Minus Zero, to prevent the snow and ice from freezing to the pavement.

The principle is to apply the liquid pre-treated salt to the road surface not only when combatting a storm, but on occasion before the storm arrives. This pro-active storm approach is called anti-icing and is being used successfully in other parts of the County and its use is growing rapidly across North America.

The utilization of rock salt coated with a deicing solution, allows for lessor applications of material. The use of this product will help the Department to save money overall, cut down on accidents and it is better for the environment! It has been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency!! Other benefits are; the lessening of corrosion on the infrastructure and vehicles that come in contact with the deicing material, as well as a far lower melting capacity than straight salt. Rock Salt works to around 20 degrees, but the treated salt goes below Zero! It is water soluble for quick cleaning.

The purchase price of deicing materials is only 10-20% of the total cost of deicing each mile of road. The other major costs of regular labor, overtime, equipment, maintenance, insurance, fuel, etc. make up over 80% of the total cost of deicing each mile of road. So while the Magic Minus Zero purchase price adds a bit to the overall cost, the savings will more than offset the increase in purchase price through saving money on the bulk of the costs of deicing each mile of road. We are making decisions based on the total cost of deicing the road versus just one minor input. And what price do you put on public safety with cleaner and safer roads?

It is one more way we are trying to “go green” in our Town. The material we have selected is much less corrosive than salt (approximately that of rainwater), and less harmful to concrete, vegetation and animals. We are putting less harmful salts out into the environment around our Town and its waterways. It is the only deicer on the Federal Governments “Design for Environment” go green designation, and, on the NYS Snow and Ice Contract! For more information on the product, where it will be used, or any other questions, please contact Mr. Dan Amatura, Highway Superintendent, at 716-683-3426.