

Salt Management Strategy (SaMS)

4th Non-Traditional BMPs Workgroup Meeting

January 23, 2020

The fourth meeting for the Non-Traditional BMPs Workgroup for the Salt Management Strategy (SaMS) was held from 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm on January 23, 2020 at Northern Virginia Regional Commission at 3040 Williams Drive, Fairfax, Virginia.

Attendance

Twelve individuals, including two Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) staff and one staff from the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB; DEQ's contractual support), participated in the meeting.

Andy Alden, VA Tech Transportation Institute[†]
Heidi Bonnaffon, MWCOG
Glenda Booth, Friends of Dyke Marsh
Marty Hurd, Fairfax County
Will Isenberg, DEQ*
Lauren Mollerup, Virginia Department of
Transportation (VDOT)

Jonathan Murray, Fairfax County
Niffy Saji, Fairfax Waterⁱ
Erfaneh Sharifi, ICPRB*
Sarah Sivers, DEQ*
Jennifer Thoah, Citizenⁱ
Greg Waters, Snow and Ice Management Co.[†]

*Facilitator

[†]Participated via conference call

ⁱGeneral Public (Non-Member of WQMR)

Meeting Highlights

At this meeting, workgroup members reviewed highlights from the previous meeting and discussed revisions and proposed additional edits to the workgroup products since that time. Meeting discussions focused on workgroup products and/or recommendations, resulting in the following outcomes:

- Identified minor revisions to the materials developed to recommend best practices for residents and drivers, including support to develop an infographic specific to the resident best practices.
- Discussion on process for piloting new deicers/mixtures, specifically the additional information drafted to more fully address what a result of “favorable” means in terms of tests determining environmental impacts concluded with the decision to not include it due to the level of technical detail and complexity.
- The workgroup approved the inclusion of the following products and/or recommendations in the SaMS document:
 - Summary evaluation of non-chloride deicers
 - Process for piloting new deicers/mixtures
 - Overview of existing certification and training programs transferable to Virginia

- Best practices for residents (in the form of a pamphlet, information for future webpages and support to develop an infographic)
- Best practices for drivers (in the form of an infographic)
- Support to include three specific future recommendations that once implementation is underway and more information learned, should be evaluated. These include the future recommendation to consider contract language for non-transportation winter maintenance (i.e. property maintenance of parking lots, sidewalks, etc.); revisit the topic of certification and training to identify if further recommendations are supported, and support for research and pilot programs of non-chloride deicers to further the effort to identify a viable alternative.

Notes for Other Workgroups / Potential Areas of Overlap:

Education and Outreach Workgroup (EOWG): The infographic to be developed providing information in a social media friendly format of best practices for residents will be developed in time for review by the EOWG' final meeting on February 25th. The Non-Traditional BMP workgroup supports the EOWG undertaking review and approval of this material.

Follow-up Action Items:

DEQ will make a good faith effort to address all of the modifications to the best practices for drivers and residents. The workgroup approved those materials moving forward into the SaMS document, understanding that DEQ will make a good faith effort to address the comments in those revisions. If any of the proposed modifications are unable to be made, the workgroup also agreed that they are comfortable with the best practices for drivers and residents in their current form, understanding that there may be challenges to accommodating the proposed modifications.

Meeting Summary

Introductions

The meeting opened with brief introductory remarks from DEQ. Participants then briefly introduced themselves, providing their name and the organization they represent.

An overview of the [third meeting](#) of the Non-Traditional BMPs Workgroup, held on October 3, 2019, was provided during the meeting. Meeting highlights, workgroup action items, and notes from other workgroups are available [online](#).

The objective of this 4th and final meeting was to wrap-up the discussions on action items worked on since the last meeting and clearly identify and finalize the products and recommendations this workgroup wants to include in the SaMS document.

During the course of the meeting, to clearly identify the workgroup's position on various decisions points, DEQ used the SaMS Polling/Feedback Process ([SAC Polling/Feedback Process](#)). Polling was used to identify the level of support, as shown by a single response from each organization, for the final workgroup recommendations/resources. After each final recommendation/resource was discussed, all workgroup member organizations were asked to indicate their level of support by holding up one of three colored cards. Green cards indicated that the organization was "in support" of the final version of the recommendation/resource, yellow cards indicated that the organization "can live with" the final version of the recommendation/resource, and red cards indicated that the organization "cannot live with" the final version of the recommendation/resource. Where concerns were identified (red cards),

workgroup members discussed the concerns and sought for resolution. In accordance with SAC decisions from the Second SAC meeting, if more than 50% of the workgroup members present indicate they are “in support” or “can live with it,” then the recommendation/resource was approved.

A [discussion guide](#) was provided to help facilitate discussion of the meeting, which followed the agenda outline. The main topics of this meeting’s discussion are summarized below.

Contracting for Non-Transportation Winter Maintenance

During the overview of the 3rd meeting, further discussion was held on this topic, which was not proposed to be included in the SaMS document based upon the outcome of workgroup’s decisions at the previous meeting that identified further effort was not supported. A future recommendation, recommending revisiting this topic was agreed upon at the 3rd meeting, however.

Discussion points:

- Concerns voiced by a couple workgroup members that this topic would not be addressed in the SaMS document, other than as a future recommendation. Some felt that this is an oversight and general/non-specific language recommending improvements or suggestions of content that may be considered in a contract could have been considered.
 - The concerns discussed at the previous meeting, which resulted in the workgroup’s decision not to proceed with this recommendation, were reiterated. Those pertained to concerns to provide recommendations, even generally, from those with limited expertise on a subject that has potential legal ramifications. Additionally, it was noted that as the decision was not to proceed at the last meeting and the purpose of this meeting is to finalize recommendations, there is not time currently to develop recommendations on this topic.
 - The resolution, which was approved through polling (see the future recommendations section below) was to keep this as a future recommendation, include a hyperlink in the future recommendation to the City of Edina’s contracting resources so that its implementation can be monitored, and to note it is a high priority and recommend it be addressed in the near term.
- Polling

Best Practices for Winter Maintenance Non-Professionals

Best Practices for Drivers/Commuters

The workgroup discussed the [Driver BMP Infographic](#) document.

Discussion points:

- A workgroup member suggested adding the message: “Stay Home, Stay Safe, Save Salt, Save Water”.
- Consider changing the “Help reduce Virginia’s salt footprint” on the tagline to “Help Virginia salt smart”.
- Revise the infographic to make it “snappy” based on the comments.
- Additional text can accompany the infographic when it is shared to make it audience-specific.
- Add a picture that has a stream next to a road to tie this message to the environmental impacts of salt use.
- Consider merging the right two bullets if possible.
- Consider changing “appropriate” to “smart.”

- Poll to approve final document (noting that revisions will be shared after a good faith effort to address them):
 - 4 green
 - 2 yellow
 - 0 red

The document will be revised based on the comments received and will be part of the SaMS document.

Best Practices for Residents

Workgroup members discussed the revised version of the [Residents Winter Smart Salting Quick Guide \(pamphlet\)](#) and the [Webpages for Residential BMPs](#) and provided some comments.

Discussion points:

- Move the bullet “If the sun comes out and you can wait, let the sun do some of the work before you apply salt” up higher in the list of bulleted recommendations to give it more prominence.
- Consider adding a sentence/bullet for “one teaspoon salt contaminates 5 gallons of water” to inform on the environmental impact or the “why” one should consider this information.
- Consider changing “resident’s guide to smart salting” to “a resident’s guide to smart salting” to address comment on punctuation of possessive and plural of “residents”.
- Take out homemade “brining” recommendations.
- Add “deicing” to the sentence “Any materials that contain nitrogen or phosphorus are illegal to sell in Virginia”.
- Workgroup supported the creation of an infographic using the information on the left side of the document. Additionally, they concurred with the infographic being reviewed and approved by the Education and Outreach Workgroup for inclusion into SaMS.
- Poll to approve final document (noting that revisions to the pamphlet will be shared after a good faith effort to address them):
 - 6 green
 - 0 yellow
 - 0 red

The document will be revised based on the comments received and will be part of the SaMS document.

Non-Chloride Deicers

Non-Chloride Deicer Matrix

The workgroup reviewed the final version of the [Comparison of Non-chloride Deicers \(presented as a matrix\)](#) and clarifying questions regarding the intent and purpose of the resource were addressed.

- Poll to approve final document:
 - 3 green
 - 1 yellow
 - 0 red

No additional revisions to the matrix based upon discussions were identified. The document will be part of the SaMS document.

Process for Deicer Piloting

During the October meeting, discussion on the [Process for Piloting New Deicers/Mixtures document](#) resulted in a recommendation to revise the process to address several comments, such as what is considered “favorable,” and to include chronic toxicity effects as well. In response to that comment, a draft document was provided to identify thresholds for what is “favorable” to help evaluate the potential environmental impact (BOD and toxicity) of a new deicer or mixture of deicers.

Discussion points:

- Workgroup members discussed their discomfort with the technical nature of the new information. It was generally felt that this level of information was too detailed and would benefit from expert review. The discussion concluded in the workgroup’s decision to not include the new resource “[Identifying ‘Favorable’ Thresholds for New Deicers or Mixtures of Deicers Piloting Framework](#)” in the SaMS doc.
- The workgroup members support keeping the “[Process for Piloting New Compounds for Mixtures](#)” which provides a generalized process, similar to existing processes with the notable exception of including a step for environmental consideration. Additionally, the workgroup directed that this information should be framed in the SaMS document as general consideration.
- Poll to approve final document:
 - 3 green
 - 2 yellow
 - 0 red

The document will be part of the SaMS document.

Comparison of Existing Certification and Training Programs

Workgroup members discussed the [Comparison of Salt Management Certification Programs](#).

Discussion points:

- Discussion on how to frame the resource in the SaMS document, as some felt it should be done in a manner that identifies potential benefits. Other members felt that the benefits are still not known and time to implement is needed before making those types of statements. The conversation resulted in the workgroup members concurring with suggesting it could result in potential benefits. Also, noted could distinguish the benefits of training separate from certification.
- A workgroup member suggested revising “X”s to a check mark on page 12 of the document as visually this gives the impression that the program does not offer that item, when the opposite is what is meant by the mark.
- It was mentioned during this discussion that one of the future recommendations for consideration by the workgroup, is for this topic to be revisited once implementation is underway. Once more is learned, conversation could be furthered on the benefits that may come from certification programs such as potential liability relief and marketing advantages. The workgroup members concurred with this approach.
- Poll to approve final document:
 - 1 green
 - 5 yellow with 3 concerns: not being a priority for recommendation now, not being an explicit recommendation, and being a “contract language” as opposed to consideration.
 - 0 red

The document will be revised based on the comments received and included in the SaMS document.

Recommendations for Future Action and/or Consideration

Summarized below are the three recommendations that in previous workgroup meetings were identified as topics they would like to revisit in the future, after implementation has been underway and experience gained, or identifies there's desire to pursue the item but acknowledges there is not sufficient time or resources to address it at this time. The workgroup members were polled to identify if there was support for including those items as future recommendations in the SaMS document.

- After some experience in implementation, consider developing a recommendation that pertains best practices for contracts used for non-transportation winter maintenance (i.e. properties and parking lots)
 - 0 green
 - 6 yellow
 - 0 red
- After some experience in implementation, recommendation to revisit the concept of certification and any potential support for recommending certification as a best practice.
 - 3 green
 - 1 yellow
 - 0 red
- Future recommendation to support research to identify viable and effective non-chloride deicers.
 - 3 green
 - 1 yellow
 - 0 red

The above items will be included in the SaMS doc for consideration during implementation of SaMS.

Meeting Wrap-up:

DEQ will revise the documents per workgroup members' comments. A good faith effort will be made to address all proposed modifications to the materials discussing best practices for residents and drivers the final versions will be shared with the workgroup members. The infographic for resident best practices will be coordinated with the Education and Outreach Workgroup for their consideration at their final meeting.

DEQ reminded members who are serving on the Steering Committee of the expectation of their role. That is to review the document fully and to coordinate internally with their organization to gather any additional feedback.

DEQ thanked all the members for their participation in this workgroup and all the hard work over the last year and a half.

DEQ sent out a follow-up survey after this workgroup meeting to collect any comments or feedback that came to light after the meeting.

Handouts from the meeting are available on the SaMS Meeting Materials [website](#).

All information, questions, additional resources, etc. should be emailed to Will Isenberg (william.isenberg@deq.virginia.gov) and Sarah Sivers (sarah.sivers@deq.virginia.gov) to reduce email traffic among NTB workgroup members.

Meeting notes were prepared and submitted by the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin.

Additional Feedback Contributed to the Follow Up Survey:

A survey was shared with workgroup members following the meeting to capture any additional thoughts members may have had following the meeting. Feedback is arranged below based on the sections of the agenda. Only sections where additional thoughts were provided are included:

Summarize Workgroup's Products / Recommendations:

"I do agree with those who suggested that investigation into potential liability relief for certified property managers/owners and contractors would be addressed in the future should be included on our final recommendations"