WEST BEND®

Helping Industries Prevent Slips, Trips, and Falls

Choosing and Using the Right Ice Control/Melt Product

When selecting an ice control/melting product, it's important to realize there's no single product that's ideal for all situations. You should consider the cost, temperature, potential for damage to concrete and vegetation, and corrosion of metals. This table provides information on the most common ice control products used.

Compound[t]	Relative Price	Lowest Effective Temperature	Harm to Concrete/ Asphalt	Notes
sodium chloride/rock salt	$	15˚F	minimal/moderate*	Harmful to vegetation and corrosive to metal
calcium chloride	$$	-25˚F	minimal/moderate	Can cause injury if over-applied to vegetation
magnesium chloride	$$	-10˚F	minimal	Can cause injury if over-applied to vegetation
calcium magnesium acetate	$$$	20˚F	moderate	Minimal effect on vegetation
potassium chloride	$$$	25˚F	minimal	Can cause injury if over-applied to vegetation
urea	$	20˚F	very minimal	Can cause injury if over-applied to vegetation
potassium acetate	$$$$	-15˚F	none	Generally a liquid used as anti-icing agent. Not harmful to plants; not corrosive.

Always follow label directions.
Don't use on concrete less than one year old.

General Guidelines for Using Ice Melt Products

- Have a plan.
  - ✓ Obtain ice melt products and use with the proper application equipment.
  - ✓ Ensure areas are cleared of snow/ice and that ice melt products are applied before pedestrians walk on the areas.
- Remove as much snow and ice as possible before applying ice melt. Excess snow and ice simply decrease the effectiveness of the products.
- Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for the proper application rate.
  - ✓ More is not necessarily better.
  - ✓ Ice melt products dissolve, spreading out during normal use.
- Wear appropriate protective clothing. Some ice melt products are harmful to your skin.
- If you're certain a storm is coming, pre-apply the ice melt compound to aid in ice/snow removal.
- Ice melt solutions can be brought inside buildings on shoes/boots and can cause damage to flooring materials and cause slipping hazards. Use walk-off mats to prevent tracking the solutions through the building. Routinely clean or change the mats during periods of high traffic.
- In extreme cold, ice melt products simply don't work or aren't cost effective. Then the best control measure is to use sand or other material to increase traction.