

Let it Snow!

Winter is here! and with it comes the winter conditions. So, while all of us Californians whistle with Bing, “I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas”, let’s take a look, just for fun, at BMPs related to snow. To do so, I am drawing on information from folks who know a thing or two about snow; the Lake County, Illinois Public Works Department.

Both salt and sand used for snow and ice management have negative impacts on the aquatic environment and the entire watershed. Some of the primary ways to reduce the negative effects is to:

1. *Reduce the amount and frequency of salt and sand application.*
2. *Store salt and sand in a covered and lined bermed area away from storm drain inlets.*
3. *Create brine with the deicer before application will make it more effective at melting the snow.*



Salt alternatives, such as Calcium Magnesium Acetate, Magnesium Chloride, or Calcium Chloride are generally just as effective as salt without being as damaging to the environment. Regardless of the deicing substance and method, it is important to sweep the sand off the parking lot, driveway, or sidewalk after the storm and in the spring after snowmelt.

In addition, individuals may also petition for local ordinances that ban the use of salt in ecologically susceptible areas, in order to protect waters, wetlands or other sensitive areas. One way of reducing damage from de-icing salt is to have permeable pavers that infiltrate snowmelt for sidewalks, driveways and parking areas where practical.¹

Now, after reading that, aren’t you glad you live in California? The only sand we have to sweep in the parking lot is what we track in from the beach! So, whether you are just dreaming of a white Christmas or are actually living in a white Christmas, you have to have BMPs in place to protect storm water quality through all seasons. Have a happy holiday season from your friends at WGR!



¹ Source: <http://www.lakecountyil.gov/Stormwater/LakeCountyWatersheds/BMPs/SnowIceRemoval.htm>

"To Do List" for December:

- Monthly Storm Water Observations (Form 4)
- Storm Water Sampling (if first or second events happen)
- Quarterly Non-Storm Water Observations sometime between now and **New Year's Eve, Dec. 31** (Forms 2 & 3)
- Check to make sure garbage bin lids are closed, scrap metal and other bins are covered, and drains are protected from erosion.



Snow is Important to Our State!

Our State relies heavily on snow pack to supply water to our homes, businesses, and to grow food for our hungry State. For the past several years there has been much talk about climate change and the dwindling water supply. However, after several seasons of lower than normal snow fall in the Sierras, we are starting to see more encouraging snow pack measurements. Last year, the storm season ended with a State-wide snow pack of over 150% of normal. This year, we are off to a good start again. Take a look at the following figures provided by the California Department of Water Resources.² At this early date, we already have received over a quarter of the snow needed by April 1st.



Snow Water Equivalents (inches)

December 06, 2010

Provided by the California Cooperative Snow Surveys

Report generated: 12/06/2010 11:17

Summary By Section			
Section		Today	Yesterday
NORTH	Number of Stations Reporting	29	32
	Average snow water equivalent	8"	7"
	Percent of April 1 Average	26%	23%
	Percent of normal for this date	135%	123%
CENTRAL	Number of Stations Reporting	45	45
	Average snow water equivalent	9"	8"
	Percent of April 1 Average	29%	26%
	Percent of normal for this date	144%	133%
SOUTH	Number of Stations Reporting	30	30
	Average snow water equivalent	6"	5"
	Percent of April 1 Average	23%	20%
	Percent of normal for this date	137%	123%
Statewide Summary			
	Statewide Average SWEQ	8"	7"
	Statewide Percent of April 1	27%	24%
	Statewide Percent of Normal	141%	130%

² Source: http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/snowsurvey_sno/DLYSWEQ



The Compliance Corner ...

New Industrial General Permit?

The current Industrial General Permit (Order No. 97-03-DWQ) expired on April 17, 2002. Since that time the State Water Resources Control Board has tried a couple of times to renew the permit, but has always gotten hung up on the question of including numeric permit limits. According to a Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board staff member, the State is now again in the process of updating the draft Industrial General Permit. The California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) has formed a subcommittee lead by Maureen Daggett to provide input to the new General Industrial Permits (GIPs). The State Board has said that the new GIP will be modeled after the new Construction General Permit with NALs (numeric action levels). The permit may also require minimum BMPs, Rain Event Action Plans (REAPs), numeric effluent limits (NELs) and eliminate wet season and dry season distinctions. Reporting through the State's on-line SMARTS system will most likely now be required of all permittees. The CASQA GIP subcommittee broke into the following smaller issues groups: Permitting and Compliance Strategy; BMPs; Monitoring; MS4s and Responsibilities / Qualifications. The subcommittee is formulating a white paper for CASQA to submit to the State Board for consideration prior to drafting the new permit. To monitor the CASQA involvement on this permit go to www.casqa.org. Also, keep tabs on this permit development by watching the State Board's storm water website at:


www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/

We Have a Winner !!!



Cynthia Barber submitted the winning answer!

How much oil can be spilled to the storm drainage system before it needs to be reported to the State?

Cynthia submitted a very thorough and accurate reply. But, in short, any amount of oil spilled to a storm drain or water way must be reported, and an oil spill 42 gallons (1 barrel) or greater to the ground must be reported. She will receive a **\$25** eGiftCard to  so she can finish her Christmas shopping!

Need a last minute BMP for someone on your shopping list?

Check out the latest BMPs and products at ...



December *STORM WATER CONTEST*

Ho, ho, ho ... Here is an easy question from Storm Santa.

By December 31st, submit a response for the following question by email to jteravskis@wgr-sw.com .

Review your facility's SWPPP and name three things that must be addressed in the document.

All persons submitting correct answers will be placed in a drawing. The winner will receive a \$25 eGiftCard to **amazon.com** .



Please contact us if you have any questions ...

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**Technical Questions about Storm Water Compliance?
Call ...**

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From our WGR Family to Yours

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Compliant New Year 2011!