

Environment Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1031

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SODIUM CHLORIDE TO MITIGATE ICE
Title: AND SNOW ACCUMULATIONS.

Vote Date: 3/29/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/19/2021

File No.:

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. Jaime S. Foster, 57th Dist.

Rep. David Michel, 146th Dist.

Sen. Saud Anwar, 3rd Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

Road salt runoff in water systems may often contaminate public water supplies and residential wells, of which 800,000 Connecticut residents rely on for their primary source of drinking water. Concerns have been expressed that such contaminations are, in part, due to the improper application of road salt during winter roadway maintenance operations. Additionally, travel distance concerns have been expressed regarding minimal availabilities for the "Connecticut Green Pro Snow" certification program at select parts of the state. To date, this program has been offered three times between 2018 and 2019 at the following locations: Burlington, Durham, and South Windsor.

To encourage proper applications of road salt on state and municipal roadways, and to reduce contamination of residential wells and drinking water sources, this bill seeks to (1) provide at least one voluntary training of the "Connecticut Green Snow Pro" certification program for state, municipal, and private road salt applicators in each county in the state of Connecticut, and (2) require the establishment of a low / no-salt standard in areas draining into public drinking water reservoirs.

JFS Language – LCO 6091:

Changes section 5 from "any customer" to "any customer or potential customer" and the term "sodium chloride" to "sodium and chloride". Adds additional statement testing shall be performed by an environmental laboratory in accordance with CGA sections 19a-29a.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Katie Dykes, Commissioner, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

SB1031 establishes a training and certification program for commercial applicators of sodium chloride aimed at relying on Connecticut Best Management Practices "Green Snow Pro: Sustainable Winter Operations" guide for municipalities. Proposed also gives liability protection to certified applicators and those that use the services of certified applicators. In SB931 has recordkeeping requirements for commercial applicators of sodium chloride, and some reporting requirements related to training, programmatic goals, and recommendations for future legislation.

The partnership with UCONN Tech Transfer Center in conjunction with Department of Transportation helps address complaints from those with drinking water wells, and issues with applicators of sodium chloride.

Deidre Gifford, Acting Commissioner, Dept of Public Health

Sodium Chloride increases the corrosivity and leach harmful metals and creates damages plumbing and appliance. Excessive salt leads to contaminants in groundwater. The best strategy is to reduce contamination of impacted groundwater sources.

SB1031 incentivizes training attendance for applicators by reducing liability and helps reduce over application. SB1031 establishes an electronic reporting system for reporting sodium chloride impacted wells with local health departments. Local health departments are required to have enough resources to implement an electronic reporting system.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Jason Bowsza, First Selectman, Town of East Windsor

Requests sections 4 and 5 to be amended to include testing and notification of ethylene dibromide and nitrites in addition to sodium chloride (currently listed in SB1031). Affected neighborhoods need help to filter, repair or connect to public water assemblies.

Betsy Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Council of Small Towns

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) supports sections 1 to 3. Section 4 is vague. Property owners can self-identify, but there are no parameters for health directors to

follow. Section 5 confuses as written, it asks for the water to be tested prior to the addition of water softener, which is used to soften water hardness.

Alicea Charamut, Executive Director, Rivers Alliance of Connecticut

Road salt threaten private wells and public drinking water supplies, they are equally as detrimental to aquatic organisms. The statement of purpose should be amended to reflect and include all surface waters and ground water. Testimony also included a link to, and referenced, the 2015 US Geological Survey Report: *Nutrient, Organic Carbon, and Chloride Concentrations and Loads in Selected Long Island Sound Tributaries: Four Decades of Change Following the Passage of the Federal Clean Water Act.*

The Environment Committee received more than five additional testimonials for SB1031.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None

Reported by: Steve Smith

Date: 3/31/2021