



AN EARTH-FRIENDLY ALTERNATIVE TO ICE-MELTING SALTS

By Laura Terlizzi

Do you remember playing word association games as a child? For example, what is the first thing to pop into your mind when someone says the word "salt"? Pepper? Sea? When someone says "environment," then "salt," does it prompt such words as toxic, destructive, expensive or life-threatening? Perhaps it should.

Death by Salt

In 2004, Mark Watson's cocker spaniel Grover died suddenly from lymphoma. Shortly after Grover's unexpected death, two other dogs that lived on the same street in Ottawa, Ontario, also suddenly succumbed to cancer. Mr. Watson discussed the deaths with a veterinarian oncologist who claimed that such diagnoses were on the increase and further suggested the lymphoma may be linked to the toxins found in the ice-melting products – the road salt – used by municipalities and homeowners. It was reasoned that animals would lick the salt off their paws and ingest the toxic chemicals.

After extensive research, Mr. Watson discovered that not only does the unpurified rock salt in ice-melting products contain traces of heavy metals such as mercury and lead; it is also frequently mixed with an anti-caking agent called ferro cyanide. In addition, the salt can contain potassium chloride, calcium chloride and magnesium chloride, none of which can be removed through conventional water treatments. This, according to Mark Watson's research, is supported by a variety of reports and studies. Therefore, these same dangerously toxic and harmful chemicals can and do end up in places such as our soil and water supplies.

Safer Solutions

Mr. Watson became dedicated to his personal quest to find an effective, natural alternative to the traditional methods used to melt ice. His mission to replace salt led him to the discovery of a product that is safer for humans, animals, municipal infrastructure, properties and our overall environment. Further, it is also extremely cost efficient when one considers the astronomical financial burden incurred in repairs of the damaging ramifications of road salt.

After due diligence in searching for a solution, Mark Watson discovered that in Scandinavia, the use of salt as a de-icer has been

avoided for quite some time. This information led to deeper investigation through which an all-natural volcanic mineral was uncovered. The extremely porous, negatively-charged, high surface area mineral formed with unique characteristics was found to be able to absorb the thin layer of water on the surface of ice while embedding itself to create a sandpaper effect, which becomes a safe and very effective traction agent that actually has environmental benefits. The discovery of this all-natural product was the solution to Mr. Watson's quest for a safer and eco-friendly alternative to road salt.

Ecotraction is said to be the safest, most environmentally beneficial, cost-effective ice management solution on the mar-



ket. It offers superior, instant traction and an impressive host of additional advantages to the consumer and the Earth. Containing no toxins or chemicals, the product is free of the harmful list of safety concerns to humans and animals. The natural benefits to our environment include the release of nutrients and minerals back to the soil and plants. It aerates soil through its porous, honeycomb structure, and helps reduce watering requirements. Lawn damage from dog urine can also be reduced as Ecotraction neutralizes ammonia before it burns the grass. It absorbs and removes heavy metals from lakes, rivers and sewage.

Also absorbed is the residual white sodium staining caused by salt and other ice-melting products. Also discovered was this unique product's ability to absorb odours and filter air.

Laura Terlizzi is an independent writer, fine artist and educator. Having been born and raised on the West Coast, much of Laura's work is inspired by nature and the beautiful environment in which she lives. Ecotraction is produced and distributed by Earth Innovations. Resources, benefits and contact information can be found at www.ecotraction.com.

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