

Edmonton's sand and salt strategy saves more than just money

City programs recycle abrasive materials and reduce salt use

Motorists depend on sand and salt to safely navigate their way on Edmonton's winter roads, but the use of abrasives and de-icing materials can come at both a financial and environmental cost. In recognition of that fact, the City of Edmonton's Transportation Services department is working with the Edmonton Waste Management Centre of Excellence and Sand Recycling Ltd to recycle sand and use less salt, saving taxpayer dollars and reducing negative environmental impacts.



"We've been able to divert over 1.1 million tonnes of sand over the past eleven years," said Blair Buchholtz, General Supervisor of Aggregate Recycling, Transportation Services. "That represents a cost savings of more than \$50 million."

Instead of hauling and dumping the 150,000 tonnes of sand used on winter streets, the City retrieves the material and recycles it. Approximately 80 per cent is reused the following winter.

Following the success of the sand recycling initiative, the City also launched a Sand Salt Mixing Program in 2010 that has gone from mixing six per cent salt into roadways sand down to four per cent with no change to performance. The reduction was possible through more accurate mixing methods.

"Sand Recycling Ltd is proud to partner with the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Waste Management Centre of Excellence in the research and development of sustainable sand recycling and mixing technologies," said John Mundy, President of Sand Recycling Ltd.

"Providing the research and development support to a successful innovation has been most gratifying," said Daryl McCartney, Executive Director of the Edmonton Waste Management Centre of Excellence (EWMCE). "Reducing both the environmental impact and operating costs are wins for the environment and the taxpayers of Edmonton and the EWMCE is committed to continue working with the City to provide even higher performance efficiencies and cost savings."

The Sand Recycling and Mixing Programs strive for improvements each year and constantly experiment with new materials, methods and equipment to look for solutions that are more environmentally and economically sustainable.

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