

Fact Sheet: How to Use Salt to Imitate Road Salt

The reading selection explained how we use road salt to melt ice and snow on the roads in the winter. Later, this road salt enters the soil at the side of the highways and runs off into water systems.

1. How salty should your experimental mixture be? Here are the facts:
 - The soil at the edge of the highway is the most heavily polluted. There you could find up to 6 ml (approx. $1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp) of salt to 1 liter (1 qt) of water.
 - At about 9 m from the road, expect to find about 5 ml (1 tsp) of salt to 1 liter (1 qt) of water.
 - At about 18 m from the road, you might find up to 3 ml (approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp) of salt to 1 liter (1 qt) of water.
2. Now that you know the facts, discuss with your group how to set up your own experiment.
 - Decide how salty to make your solution.
 - Figure out how much salt and water solution you will add each time to make sure the runoff enters the aquatic ecosystem. Remember that you should use about the same number of dropperfuls of water that the class has been using throughout the unit to water your ecocolumn.
 - Decide how often you will apply the salt and water solution. Water the ecocolumn as often as the class did before. Remember, you don't want to overwater your terrarium.
 - Set up a recordkeeping system in order to keep track of this information on a daily basis (for example, a chart, a calendar, or a diagram).