

Deicing salts can injure your trees!

The winter season often brings heavy snowfall and ice, which makes the clearing of roadways necessary. Salt is great for clearing roads, driveways, and sidewalks of ice and snow, however, a good thing for streets and walkways can be downright rotten for your trees, according to the tree experts at the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).



“Excessive exposure to salt can cause widespread damage to your trees, leading to permanent decline and sometimes death,” said Jim Skiera, ISA Executive Director. “The problem with salt damage is that it might not show up on your trees until summer, when deicing salt is the last culprit you would suspect.”

To minimize the damage done to trees by deicing salts, ISA Certified Arborists offer the following tips:

- Use less salt. Mix deicing salt with abrasives such as sand, cinders, and ash, or use alternatives such as calcium magnesium acetate and calcium chloride.
- Protect your trees from salt trucks on the street. If possible, set up barriers between the street and your trees to keep salt spray from hitting tree trunks.
- Plant salt-resistant trees. Trees such as the sycamore maple, white spruce, willow, and birch tend to be more salt-resistant than other species. How well they fare varies from climate to climate across the country.
- Improve soil drainage. Add organic matter to your soil to help filter salt deposits.



You can also keep your trees healthy by taking care of their basic needs. Other tips that will help combat damage that deicing salt may otherwise do:

- Irrigate to flush the salts from the soils in spring.
- Mulch sufficiently to reduce water loss.
- Control pest infestations and destructive tree diseases.

If in doubt, contact a local ISA Certified Arborist in your area.

From all of us here at Treescape, have a wonderful and safe Holiday season! We look forward to helping you with all your tree care needs in 2013!!

