

November 19, 2025

VIA EMAIL

Re: Lake Simcoe Region Conversation Authority - Chloride in the Lake Simcoe Watershed

At its Regular Meeting of Council held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Council approved the following resolution:

Resolution 2025-352

Moved by: Councillor Ferragine

Seconded by: Councillor Scott

WHEREAS chloride concentrations measured in Lake Simcoe have steadily increased since the 1970's and, if unchecked, could exceed the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment Chronic Guideline by approximately 2069; and

WHEREAS chloride concentrations in urban tributaries are routinely above that Chronic Guideline, occasionally above the Acute Guideline and have recently exceeded the concentration of ocean water in one urban tributary, and continue to increase everywhere due to the use of winter salt on roads and parking lots; and

WHEREAS these concentrations are lethal to some species of fish and benthic invertebrates, and decreasing the amount of winter salt use throughout the watershed is critical to the near-term health of urban tributaries and long-term health of Lake Simcoe; and

WHEREAS a barrier to the reduction of salt application for parking lots and walkways is the scarcity of trained and certified winter maintenance contractors; and

WHEREAS a more substantial barrier to the reduction of salt application for parking lots and walkways is concern over liability; and

WHEREAS businesses in the winter maintenance sector are seeing insurance and legal costs escalate to the point where many have failed, and some property owners have been unable to find winter maintenance contractors; and

WHEREAS the limited liability framework in practice in New Hampshire is based on the Canadian Smart About Salt guidelines and has been successfully defended in the higher courts.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Corporation of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Council supports this initiative and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation

Authority Board of Directors requesting that the Attorney General of Ontario and the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks establish and fund an expert stakeholder advisory committee to advise the Province and municipalities on the best courses of action to protect freshwater ecosystems and drinking water from the impacts of salt pollution; and

FURTHER That the Board of Directors requests that technical standards and a Provincial regulatory framework be established that limits liability for winter maintenance contractors following best practices to ensure public safety, business sustainability, and environmental protection; and

FURTHER That municipalities in the Lake Simcoe watershed lead by example by ensuring staff and/or winter maintenance contractors that maintain municipal parking lots obtain certification through the Smart About Salt program as a condition of working for the municipality; and

FURTHER That this resolution be circulated to Lake Simcoe watershed municipalities and Lake Simcoe watershed members of Provincial Parliament; and


FURTHER That municipalities in the Lake Simcoe watershed implement best management practices for municipal roads management; and

FURTHER That municipalities in the Lake Simcoe watershed collaborate with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority on an outreach campaign to raise awareness of this issue, manage expectations from the public regarding salt usage, and inspire positive action.

CARRIED

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Regards,


Tara Reynolds
Clerk, Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
(905) 775-5366 Ext 1104
treynolds@townofbwg.com

Recipients: Hon. Trevor Jones, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Hon. Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment & Climate Change
Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Hon. Mike Harris, Minister of Natural Resources & Forestry
Lake Simcoe Watershed Municipalities