

Chloride (salt) Reduction Information

The Village of Hammond is continuing its effort to reduce chlorides. The biggest culprit is water softeners and YOU CAN help! There are 3 things you need to know:

- The DNR imposes a limit to the chloride level at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Working together we can avoid DNR fines and /or expensive options at the Wastewater Plant
- We can all SAVE money

Chlorides discharged from water softeners end up at the WWTP and need to be treated before being returned to the water supply. The Wisconsin DNR establishes groundwater quality standards and our discharge is reaching maximum levels. Most groundwater has some degree of hardness. Basic hardness is produced by the presence of calcium and magnesium dissolved in water. If these minerals are not removed they may build up as scale on pipes and fixtures, coat water heater elements and may cause increased detergent usage. High levels can also make water taste unpleasant and excessively high levels can contribute to certain heart ailments or high blood pressure, particularly in susceptible individuals. Chloride is not absorbed or degraded as it moves through the ground so we cannot rely on natural means of reduction. We are capable of removing a certain amount of chloride at the WWTP but when levels exceed our capabilities the Village may be fined by the State. Everyone's cooperation is needed to reduce chlorides.

What needs to be done?

- Homeowners need to review their softener settings. Older and less expensive softeners regenerate on a schedule set by a timer. More efficient softeners ("on-demand") have flow meters or hardness sensors and regenerate only after the proper amount of water use so they don't waste salt.
- Use settings for a reasonable level of softening, not the maximum, and have the controls calibrated periodically (18 grains for the Village of Hammond)
- Industries need to make reductions of chloride in products used for daily operations
Do not over-treat sidewalks when deicing

We will all benefit with:

- Saving money on softener salt
- Saving money on energy
- Saving money by avoiding significant State fines
- Saving money by avoiding costly changes to our WWTP
- Saving the quality of our water