



# Smart Salt Strategy: Local Salt Assistance Plan

Ohio Department of Transportation

November 26, 2008

During the winter months, the Ohio Department of Transportation's top priority is keeping the state's highways and bridges safe and passable by clearing ice and snow. Since the 1930s, rock salt has been the most-utilized, cost-effective ice-fighting material for keeping roadways safe. However, Ohio has seen a dramatic spike in the price of rock salt this year, ranging from 50 percent to 300 percent cost increases.

Having the ability to stockpile salt over the past year, ODOT was able to purchase a significant amount of material at last season's prices. Then through its competitive bidding process this past fall, ODOT was able to secure contracts for additional salt deliveries this season. With the increased cost of salt and growing demand to be more environmentally sensitive with salt use, ODOT also put together a Smart Salt Strategy - designed to make certain that the department is as efficient as possible with the salt on hand while still ensuring continued safety on our roads.



With this Smart Salt Strategy in place, ODOT believes its current supply of salt should be adequate to meet the state's needs for the upcoming winter season. Unfortunately, many county and local governments do not have access to the salt they need.

ODOT Director James Beasley has updated the department's Smart Salt Strategy to now include an effort to assist county and local governments who have been unable to acquire salt this year. By adjusting its resources, ODOT will ration 100,000 tons of salt from its stockpiles, allowing for a one-time sale of this material to counties and local communities which were unable to secure salt contracts.

ODOT has worked with the County Engineers Association of Ohio, the Ohio Municipal League, and the Ohio Township Association to identify communities in need of assistance. Eligibility criteria - along with pricing, process, and delivery information - are listed below.

ODOT's first priority will always be maintaining an adequate supply of salt for the safety of travelers on the state highway system. By amending its Smart Salt Strategy, ODOT can also offer some help to local communities who share this commitment to safety.

## Eligibility Criteria and Prioritization

The Local Salt Assistance Plan is aimed at assisting Ohio counties and local communities that were not able to secure salt contracts. This effort is not intended to create a cheaper alternative to communities that secured contracts but were unhappy with the vendor prices.

First priority will be to maintain an adequate supply of salt for the safety of travelers on State Routes, US Routes and Interstates that ODOT must maintain. Off the state highway system, an initial survey of counties and local communities showed about 70,000 tons of need for locals with no ability to buy salt.

Political Subdivisions that received **no bids** to purchase salt will be considered in the following approach:

- Those Political Subdivisions that had previously signed up to participate as part of ODOT's competitive bidding process but were unable to buy salt (due to a lack of bids within 25 ODOT counties) will be given the first opportunity to participate in this plan.

- Political Subdivisions that responded to ODOT's initial survey will be given the second opportunity to participate.
- Finally, if there is any remaining material after addressing the needs of those who have previously been a part of ODOT's process, any Political Subdivision in the state will be given the opportunity to purchase salt on a one-time, first come, first serve basis.

ODOT encourages all counties to participate in the department's next competitive bidding process for salt, anticipated to occur in April 2009.

### **Fair Pricing**

It is ODOT's intent to be as most helpful to our local transportation partners as possible, as we work together to ensure continued safety for all Ohio travelers. This Local Salt Assistance Plan is an effort to share some of the state's resources while at the same time balancing the needs of the state highway system and the need to be good stewards of state tax dollars.

With a few exceptions, the price for salt under this plan will be \$75 per ton, based on ODOT's contract price and cost for shifting resources to accommodate this Smart Salt Strategy. The price will be determined by where the salt is picked up by the Political Subdivision. In five specific locations, however, the price is higher than \$75 per ton, based solely on ODOT's contract price.

A complete listing of prices and the locations for pickup can be found in the map at the end of this document. In order to be as fair as possible and to avoid shortages, ODOT will determine the location from which a local community can purchase salt.

### **Process for Partnership**

ODOT is currently working with the County Engineers Association of Ohio, the Ohio Municipal League and the Ohio Township Association to finalize contact information and anticipated needs of counties and local communities without salt contract bids.

After careful review of survey results, ODOT's usage and need, and the state's storage capacity, ODOT has determined the 19 locations where it will make salt available (see map). As previously stated, ODOT will determine the location from which a local community can purchase salt, in order to be as fair as possible and to avoid shortages.

- When possible, the first pickup location will be in the county of need within one of the 19 counties where ODOT is making salt available.
- A second pickup location may be designated outside of the county of need within the proximity of the request. ODOT will notify the community where this pickup will be and the price per ton.
- ODOT will designate the ultimate pick up location based on the Criteria and Prioritization outlined in this plan. ODOT will need advance notice of all requests so that we can provide a loader and operator to assist. It is expected that local communities will take possession of as much material as possible in one visit, instead of incrementally.
- An agreement must be executed between the Political Subdivision and ODOT indicating the quantity requested, pick up location, and price per ton prior to the transfer of any material. Consent legislation by the appropriate governing body must accompany the agreement. ODOT will prepare the agreement to submit to the Political Subdivision for final approval.

### **Pickup and Delivery**

- The Political Subdivisions will be responsible for the hauling of the material.
- ODOT will load salt into trucks provided by others.
- Salt will be available weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- ODOT will invoice the Political Subdivisions monthly and/or at the completion of agreement.

### **Ice and Snow... Take It Slow**

Beyond the snow plows and salt, ODOT will also work with its transportation partners in reminding all travelers that in “**Ice and Snow... Take it Slow.**” Safe driving begins behind the wheel.



Travel conditions can change from mile to mile, minute to minute, and winter weather can arrive at any time. ODOT encourages motorists to practice safe driving skills: share the road responsibly, respect snowplows on the highways, and remember, in Ice and Snow... Take it Slow.

To help motorists plan their trips and avoid potential difficulties before hitting the road, ODOT's premiere website - [www.BuckeyeTraffic.org](http://www.BuckeyeTraffic.org) - provides up-to-the-minute highway information on weather and road conditions, road closures, Highway Patrol accident updates and traffic congestion alerts; all available 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

Last season, [BuckeyeTraffic.org](http://BuckeyeTraffic.org) received more than 117 million hits during the winter driving season.

#### **Local communities interested in ODOT's Local Salt Assistance Plan should contact:**

Dave Ray, ODOT Division of Highway Operations/Maintenance Administration, at (614) 644-7105.

**For more information on ODOT's "Ice and Snow... Take It Slow" winter safety efforts, contact** Scott Varner, ODOT Division of Communications, at (614) 644-8640.

## **The Ohio Department of Transportation**

Ted Strickland, Governor  
James Beasley, P.E./P.S., Director

