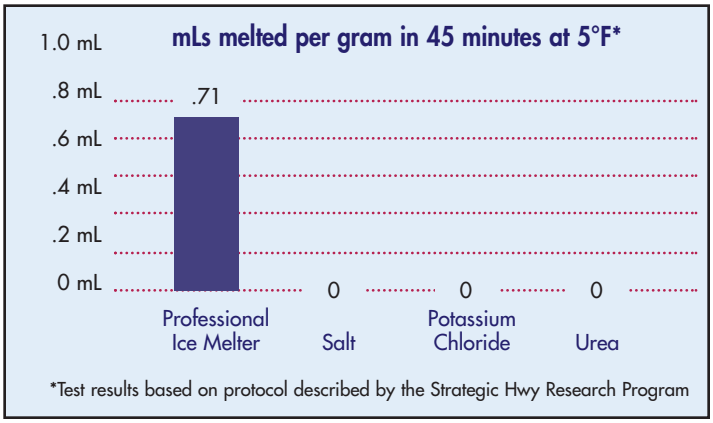
Volume Melted

When all the facts are considered it 's easy to determine which products will outperform others when evaluating volumes of ice melted.



Begin by making sure the tests use Practical Use Rates for obtaining volume data. In addition, look closely to see that the effectiveness data is obtained within expected winter temperatures over a normal period of time.

Granted, this may at first appear to be basic advice. Remember that some products will claim low melting points from theoretical results generated from tests in the lab performance dropping off once practical use rates are used.

Shelf Life and Storage Limitations

In order for ice melters to be effective, they must absorb moisture before they can form the melting brine solution. Unfortunately, the moisture gathering (hygroscopic) nature of ice melters can also present storage problems. Highly hygroscopic materials such as calcium and magnesium chloride can turn rock hard inside its container resulting in wasted material.

HOT TIP

Set up side by side comparisons of products applied with equal volumes (Practical Use Rates) to determine their effectiveness over a 15-30 minute period. If you are in a region where temperatures rarely dip below zero, expensive products that claim performance to -25° F might be overkill. Conversely ,it would not be practical to rely on sodium chloride, potassium chloride, urea, or CMA for protection against slip and fall accidents when temperatures fall below 20° F.

Granules should be uniform in size and free flowing regardless of humidity and time in storage.

While calcium and magnesium chloride are poor candidates for storage in pure form, using them as part of a blend utilizes their ability to melt ice without storage problems.