

ICE MELTERS & VEGETATION

What is the effect of your ice melt on grass and vegetation? This is a frequently asked question where building operators and owners have large areas of grass and plants on the property.

The answer to this question is that over use of any ice melt can cause browning and damage to vegetation. The best way to avoid damage is to choose an ice melt product that will do the least amount of damage. However, there are several other reasons for winter damage to grass and plant life.

The compaction of ice and snow on the grass will cause winter kill. This can happen when ice is formed on the grass eliminating the gap or “insulation” barrier between the ice or snow on the ground, thus freeze burning the vegetation. In conjunction with the compaction issue, mould can form under the compacted snow and this will cause further and more extensive damage to the grass and soil.

If the area is frequented by dogs, then the urine can become concentrated and this will cause total destruction of the grass. Also, any residual odour will attract other dogs and the problem will spread.

Another way that the vegetation can become damaged is by over spray from roadways. The most common ice melt product used on roadways is rock salt, and this will cause the most extensive damage to the grass and plants. Mixed in with this are other contaminants such as oil, detergents and fuel oils. These remain on the foliage causing considerably more damage in the winter as they do not get washed off by rain.

Salt (Sodium Chloride) will cause the most severe damage to plant life and the effects can be prolonged as the salt is retained in the soil. Even fertiliser based ice melts such as Urea and Ammonium Nitrate will cause browning as the product remains on the foliage for extended periods and is not washed away.

X22 ice melter will cause the least amount of damage to the vegetation of all the ice melts available. X22 ice melter also has the least effect on the aquatic environment. Although X22 ice melter causes the least amount of damage, the alternate products Chemfax offers – Enviro Melt, Fire N Ice and Spitfire - will not cause as much damage as Sodium Chloride, Potassium Chloride, Urea and Ammonium Nitrate.