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NEWS RELEASE

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Dubuque Wins Safe and Sustainable Snowfighting Award

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The City of Dubuque has received a Safe and Sustainable Snowfighting award from the Salt Institute for excellence in environmental consciousness and effective management in the storage of winter road salt.

Dubuque’s Public Works Department is one of 90 transportation facilities across the United States and Canada to be recognized. This is the first time Dubuque received the award and Dubuque is one of just two Iowa communities honored this year.

Clear winter roads protect lives and commerce. Every winter, more than 116,000 Americans are injured and over 1,300 killed as a result of pavement that is snow, slush or ice covered, according to the federal government. But a study of highways in Snow Belt states showed that road salt reduces crashes by 88 percent.

When the direct and indirect impact of road shutdowns on the broader economy is factored in, road salt becomes even more valuable. A one-day major snowstorm can cost a state \$300-\$700 million in direct and indirect costs, lost commerce, and productivity. In fact, deicing pays for itself within the first 25 minutes after the salt is spread—making proper salt storage and timely deicing a smart investment.

“I’m pleased that the Salt Institute has recognized the efforts of the City and staff who plan and implement our snow and ice control program,” said City of Dubuque Street and Sewer Maintenance Supervisor John Klostermann. “With the support of the mayor, city council and city manager, staff is able to provide an environmentally sustainable, high-level, snow and ice control service to our citizens.”

The City of Dubuque Public Works Department provides a full level of snow and ice control services, from the anti-icing before the storm to snow removal after the storm. Fourteen operators are dispatched at the start of a winter storm event and 24-hour service is provided until all streets are plowed and deiced. During major storm events,

additional plows are dispatched to assist the plowing operation. The City uses, on average, 7,000 tons of salt each season, but has 12,000 tons available at the start of each season to assure adequate supplies during an above-average winter season.

“These facilities have cleared a high bar,” said Salt Institute President Lori Roman. “For example, in minimizing salt runoff alone, 10 specific recommendations must be met.”

About 17 million tons of deicing salt is applied to roadways in the U.S. each year and another six million tons are spread in Canada. Having enough road salt on hand before storms hit requires advance planning and facilities that provide safe and efficient storage. Winners must also display proper maintenance and good housekeeping practices.

“The familiar sight of trucks spreading salt on icy winter roads gives motorists reassurance, as it should,” said Roman. “If that salt was stored in and spread by a facility honored with a Safe and Sustainable Snowfighting award, motorists have the added assurance of knowing the utmost care has been taken to protect public safety and the environment.”

Only a handful of local agencies in the U.S. and Canada received this recognition. A complete list by state is available from the Salt Institute.

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The Salt Institute is a North American based non-profit trade association dedicated to advancing the many benefits of salt, particularly to ensure winter roadway safety, quality water and healthy nutrition.