

**Report #2011-4
December 27, 2011**

Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Trees – Report to the City Council

Subject: Substitution of CMA for Rock Salt in Deicing of Roads, Use of Pickup Trucks

The Advisory Committee on Trees (ACT) is concerned about trees in the Roosevelt Center and Southway areas being damaged with the rock salt used for deicing the roads and parking lots. A recent soil test indicated a high level of sodium in the planter bed at the front of Roosevelt Center. This may have contributed to the demise of two London Plane trees in Roosevelt Center.

ACT proposes that the City of Greenbelt use CMA (calcium magnesium acetate) instead of rock salt for deicing in a trial area as it is known to be less damaging to trees and shrubs. We recognize that CMA is expensive compared to rock salt, therefore, the trial area should be limited. We suggest that the City use CMA in the Roosevelt Center and Southway areas in the winter of 2011-12. These are areas of the City which have had a history of rock salt damage to street trees and road plantings. The Department of Public Works would be asked to report back to the City Council in the summer of 2012 with results on the status of trees and plantings in these areas.

The ACT also recommends that the spreading of rock salt for deicing be performed by pickup trucks, whenever possible, to avoid salt deposition outside the curbs of streets.