

**Report #2014-1
October 9, 2014**

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. An earlier report from ACT (2011-4, submitted December 27, 2011) suggested replacement of CMA (calcium magnesium acetate) for rock salt. CMA has been shown to be less damaging to trees and shrubs than rock salt. CMA offers several advantages:

- **Safe for the Environment** – Low toxicity and biodegradable
- **Safe for Concrete** – No more damage than from water
- **Low Corrosion** – About as corrosive as tap water
- **Excellent Inhibitor** – Reduces chloride corrosion
- **Residual Effect** – Requires fewer applications

We recognize that CMA is expensive compared to rock salt, therefore, the area of use should probably be limited. We suggest that the City use CMA in the Roosevelt Center and Southway areas in the winter of 2014-15. 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 2015 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.