



somerville dog owners group
519 Somerville Avenue, #165
somerville, ma 02143

30 January 2011

Board of Aldermen
c/o John Long, City Clerk
City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

Re: 190749 - pet-friendly ice melt on the community path

Honorable Members of the Board of Alderman,

On behalf of the Somerville Dog Owners Group, I am writing to thank you for voting to approve Alderman Rebekah Gewirtz's order, 190749:

That the Commissioner of Public Works explore the possibility of using pet-friendly ice melt on the community path surface, as the harsh salts are an irritant to dog's paws.

There are at least three good reasons to use a pet-friendly alternative to rock salt and other harsh chemicals.

- Ice-melting agents can be dangerous to children, who may put snow that has been contaminated with them in their mouths, as well as to pets who may ingest them.
- Ice melts can cause chemical burns.
- Ice melts can be hazardous to the environment:
 - When they get into the ground water, they can cause dehydration to plant roots
 - In fresh water bodies they can harm aquatic plants and animals.

The ice melt that is being used on the walkways around our schools is different than that which is being used on other public ways in the City. If we are already using child-friendly ice melt at schools, perhaps this product be tried on the community path and other parks and open spaces that are popular among families with children and pets.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Michele Biscoe
Chairperson

promoting responsible dog ownership, safe and legal options for off-leash recreation and the equitable distribution of open space in Somerville, MA.