



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
www.cityofmadison.com

## Meeting Minutes - Approved COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

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Monday, March 17, 2014

4:30 PM

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Room 108 (City-County Building)  
Meets the 3rd Monday of the month.

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### CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

**Present:** 6 -

Steven M. Fix; Jennifer L. Giegerich; Timothy D. Baker; James P. Bennett;  
Elizabeth A. Katt-Reinders and Patricia J. Gadow

**Excused:** 3 -

Sue Ellingson; Patricia A. Lasky and Mike DePue

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Giegerich, seconded by Katt-Reinders, to Approve the Minutes. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None

### DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None

1. 33395 2013 Road Salt Report

Attachments: [2013 Road Salt Report](#)

Rick Wentz, Public Health Madison and Dane County, reviewed the highlights of the 2013 Road Salt Report. He is getting discouraged that the report continues to indicate increasing salt use and chloride levels in city wells and lakes. This year's report includes the various policies of surrounding communities. It also includes a list of recommendations by the Common Council from 1981, most of which have been or are being done.

Street Superintendent Chris Kelley was also present. He indicated the need for salt varies with the type and duration of storms. A large snow storm typically requires less salt than several small storms, when icy streets become more of a hazard, like this past winter. Madison also does not use salt below 15 degrees, as road salt does not melt ice at very low temperatures. Madison doesn't have a bare pavement policy, which means many streets are not salted. The goal is to keep them drivable, but not totally clear of snow and ice through the use of de-icers.

City Well 14 has seen dramatically increasing chloride and sodium levels.

While we have not yet exceeded Public Health and Safety standards for chloride or sodium, people on a low-sodium diet would not be able to drink city water, although these individuals are typically very aware of these limits.

One question included the relative impacts of road salt on surface water vs city wells. Smaller surface water bodies will be impacted more, but will see an improvement (from reduced salt use) much sooner than groundwater, which can take decades to see a difference. Another question was raised as to any environmental studies on the impacts of salt use on local ecosystems. Kirsti Sorsa, Public Health, indicated that studies have been done in Canada (and perhaps Minnesota and New Hampshire).

One of the issues with controlling salt use is private applicator use. There are no ordinances in place or real incentive for commercial properties to use less salt, as the risk of liability from falls outweighs other considerations. There is an interest from the committee to hear more about what has been learned about salt application on commercial properties through the Wingra Watershed planning efforts. Chloride reduction is one of the three major issues that is being addressed through that plan.

- 2. [32177](#) Discussion of a possible sentinel species for Madison area lakes

Elizabeth Katt-Reinders indicated that limnologist John Magnuson suggested cisco (lake herring) as a possible sentinel species due to its sensitivity to both climate change and nutrient loading. It is found in Lakes Mendota and Monona. Staff will invite DNR fisheries biologist Kurt Welke to the next meeting to discuss options for a fish sentinel species.

- 3. [31692](#) Proposed 2014 Rhythm & Booms Event

Chair Steve Fix attended one of the recent neighborhood Rhythm and Boom informational meetings. Madison Festivals Inc representative Rita Kelliher presented; there were questions surrounding traffic, access, and trash, but for the most part people were supportive of moving the event downtown. Jim Bennett asked whether the COE will receive a report from the event planners regarding the amount and type of fireworks used as well as the clean up efforts. Katie Crawley, Mayor's Office, indicated that she will pass this request along.

- 4. [08477](#) REPORT FROM BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

Johnson Street reconstruction will begin soon. Other major reconstructions this year include Commonwealth and Verona Rd at the Beltline.

- 5. [08478](#) REPORT FROM WATER UTILITY BOARD:

None

- 6. [08479](#) REPORT FROM SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

None

7. [14746](#) REPORT FROM BOARD OF HEALTH FOR MADISON AND DANE COUNTY:

**None**

8. [13375](#) STAFF REPORT

**Members Jennifer Giegerich and Pat Gadow have expiring terms, and should let Mike Dailey know whether they wish to be considered for reappointment. Election of officers will occur in May.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Gadow, seconded by Giegerich, to Adjourn. The motion passed by voice vote/other.**