

City-County Building (CCB) Maintenance Issues

Environmental items - excessive use of salt and use of pesticides/herbicides.

1. Excessive use of salt.

The second half of this past winter brought a lot of unstable weather, with snow mixed with temperatures that varied from day to day. With that came ice. Although that necessitated a response from CCB maintenance staff, the response was excessive at times. Piles of rock salt appeared on the steps and patio of the building and on the sidewalk in front of it.

With the building being just removed from Lake Monona, salt applied there has a short route to take to the Lake. In addition, salt tends to ruin footwear.

A more measured response is possible. Dane County Highway staff have developed the use of a salt brine solution to combat ice. They have found that it allows for more uniform application of salt, resulting in more effective reduction of ice formation. It also results in a great reduction of the amount of ice applied, saving on the impact to our lands and waterways as well as reducing expenditures of tax dollars.

A more measured response to ice in the vicinity of the City-County Building should be considered.

2. Pesticide/herbicide use.

In parking my bicycle on the Carroll Street side of the CCB, I observed signs warning people that chemical pesticides and/or herbicides had been applied to the lawn there. Given the fact that the lawn is miniscule in size, this seems like an excessive response for a very insignificant grassy area. Lawn chemicals have negative health and environmental impacts. See:

<http://www.healthylawnteam.org/>

It would send a better message to the community if the CCB were to adopt a chemical-free lawn policy.

Non-environmental item - tape on marble exterior.

I work across the street from the CCB in 1 West Wilson. We have been admonished to refrain from taping items to the marble walls. It is said to damage the marble. In addition, one of the sideshows to the protests at the Capitol were the assertions that millions of dollars of damage had been done to the building due to protesters taping posters to the walls with blue painter's tape. While these assertions were drastically overstated, taping items to marble walls is generally to be discouraged.

In this context, I would suggest that we examine the practice of taping 8 1/2 x 11 notices to the exterior marble walls of the CCB stating "Stay off of grates." The notices are unsightly and the tape is likely to damage the marble long term.

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