

ROAD SALT TESTING - WEEK OF OCT 10-16

Become a citizen scientist with this easy project!

Help us understand water quality in the Tohickon Creek watershed and protect our stream ecology!

Testing chloride in the fall provides an important baseline to better compare and understand the differences in your stream when road salt applications peak in January and February.

Sampling Instructions

- 1) **Choose a site:** Find any local creek with running water. You want to be able to walk to the streambank and safely dip a collection container into the water following the instructions below. Ideally, you (or others) may want to revisit this site for future samples
- 2) **Gather your supplies:**
 - a) A sealable plastic, glass, or metal container. A used plastic water bottle works well.
 - b) A piece of masking tape, or painter's tape, or a mailing label, and a marker or pen.
 - c) Appropriate personal attire for taking a stream sample (waterproof boots, proper clothing, etc.)
- 3) **Prepare your container:** Attach tape or mailing label to the outside of the container and record the site name (e.g., Smith's Creek) and location. A street address is OK, but **longitude/latitude are best** – here's how to get that:
<https://leafpacknetwork.org/determining-lat-long/>
- 4) **Fill your container** with water from the creek sometime between Oct 10 and Oct 16. Watch this video for best practice [instructions](#)
- 5) **Prioritize your safety over sampling.** Stream sampling should only be undertaken in safe circumstances. Do not sample in extreme weather, flooding, or high water flow. Be sure your access point is safe, both in and out. Even in safe conditions, consider taking a sample with another person, or let another person know where/when you're sampling and when you plan to return.
- 6) **Drop off your sample** with TWA members. Options are:
 - a) Bring samples to the [Bucks County Conservation District Office](#) for transport (before 3:00 10/16), or
 - b) Arrange a closer-to-home drop off site by contacting tohickonwa@gmail.com

QUESTIONS?? Contact tohickonwa@gmail.com

The bigger picture:

Road salt damages infrastructure, threatens the health of lakes and streams, and degrades drinking water and the water used to grow our food. Road salt pollution has been a subject of

both scientific investigations and public engagement for over 20 years, with some of the oldest studies dating back to the early days of the Clean Water Act.

We will test the water samples and share the results with **Stroud Water Research Center**. Stroud is coordinating stream and river sampling events across Pennsylvania for October baseline testing. More info can be found [here, including an interactive map](#) where you can zoom into prior testing done in the Tohickon Creek area.

Stroud Water Research Center has seen the impact of their science magnified when participants recognize they are not alone but are part of a larger effort to address a significant environmental challenge. This includes the impacts that road salt can have on our freshwater ecosystems, including our local streams.

The Tohickon Watershed Association can use this data to engage with local municipalities to institute best road-salting practices that keep our drivers safe and also protect our environment.