

December 20, 2004

News brief - Keene plans to use new de-icing road mixture

KEENE - The city Department of Public Works is trying a new technique to make roads safer this winter, using a solution that looks like coffee and smells like molasses: "magic salt."

The special concoction is designed to melt ice and snow faster and at lower temperatures than road salt can do, last longer on the road, and be less corrosive. It's also biodegradable.

It's also less expensive. Salt costs \$40 a ton, said Bruce Tatro, Keene highway superintendent, and Keene uses about 5,000 tons per winter.

"Magic salt" costs more, about \$62 a ton, but the city will probably only use about 2,200 tons about \$64,000 less.

The experiment is a first for Keene and for the spraying company, N.H. Ice Melt of Manchester.

The magic salt "saves crews from being out at 2 a.m.," Tatro said. "When it's done ahead of time, we're not trying to play catch-up."

- **The Associated Press**

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