House Environmental & Natural Resource Protection Committee Voting Meeting

Room 515 Irvis Office Building

Harrisburg, PA 17120

Monday, September 29th, 2025

11:00 AM

Meeting Agenda

Call to Order

Roll Call

House Bill 664 (WEBSTER) - Requires PennDOT to develop a best practices guide for road salt management.

Other Business

Adjournment

Attachments:

- HB0664 P0671 (Webster)
- HB664 Bill Analysis LDPC
- Trout Unlimted Letter of Support HB664
- Committee Vote by Designation
- PennEnvironment Letter of Support - HB 664

PRINTER'S NO. 671

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 664 Session of 2025

INTRODUCED BY WEBSTER, SANCHEZ, HILL-EVANS, KENYATTA, PIELLI, KHAN, GIRAL, BRENNAN, HOWARD, D. WILLIAMS AND MALAGARI, FEBRUARY 20, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION, FEBRUARY 20, 2025

AN ACT

Amending the act of June 1, 1945 (P.L.1242, No.428), entitled "An act relating to roads, streets, highways and bridges; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the laws administered by the Secretary of Highways and by the Department of Highways relating thereto," in special provisions affecting local authorities, providing for Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. The act of June 1, 1945 (P.L.1242, No.428), known as the State Highway Law, is amended by adding a section to read:

Section 912. Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide.--(a) Within one year of the effective date of this subsection, the department, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection, shall develop the Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide for use by local jurisdictions and the Commonwealth to minimize the adverse environmental impacts of road salt runoff.

(b) The department shall annually update the guide required under subsection (a) and shall make the guide available to the public on the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

(c) In the guide, the department may:

(1) Establish best management practices that protect the environment from the negative impacts of road salt.

(2) Identify all activities that may result in the release of road salt into the environment, including road salt storage, the application of road salt on highways and the disposal of snow that contains road salt.

(3) Take into consideration highway safety to the greatest extent possible.

(4) Establish standards and procedures for identifying:

(i) areas that are particularly vulnerable to road salt runoff; and

(ii) additional road salt management practices that need to be implemented in those areas.

(5) Establish goals for achieving a reduction of the environmental impact of road salt released into the environment.

(6) Include recommendations for a model training program for all State, local and contract personnel who perform winter maintenance activities involving the use of road salt.

(7) Establish response procedures to address uncontrolled releases of road salt that may adversely impact the environment.

(8) Establish recordkeeping and annual reporting procedures for the quantity of road salt used, the locations where the road salt is used and any training conducted.

(d) As used in this section, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Department." The Department of Transportation of the Commonwealth.

"Guide." The Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide required under this section.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

Bill No:	HB0664 PN0671	**Prepared By:**	Andrew McMenamin (717) 783-4043,6941
Committee:	Environmental & Natural Resource Protection	**Executive Director:**	Evan Franzese
Sponsor:	Webster, Joe		
Date:	2/21/2025		

A. <u>Brief Concept</u>

Requires PennDOT to develop a best practices guide for road salt management.

C. <u>Analysis of the Bill</u>

HB 664 amends the State Highway Law (Act 428 of 1945) by requiring PennDOT to develop a best practices guide for road salt management. This bill would require PennDOT to do the following:

- Develop a Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide within one year of the effective date in consultation with DEP.
    - The guide is intended for use by local jurisdictions and the Commonwealth to minimize the adverse environmental impacts of road salt, though there are no requirements for local governments under the bill.
- Update the guide annually.
- Make the guide available to the public on their website.

Content of Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide

PennDOT may do the following in the guide:

- To the greatest extent possible, consider highway safety.

- Establish best management practices to protect the environment from the negative impacts of road salt.
- Identify all activities that may result in the release of road salt into the environment.
- Establish standards and procedures for identifying:
    - areas that are particularly vulnerable to road salt runoff; and
    - additional road salt management practices that need to be implemented in those areas.
- Establish goals reducing the environmental impact of road salt use.
- Include recommendations for a model training program for all State, local, and contracted personnel who perform winter maintenance activities.
- Establish response procedures to address uncontrolled releases of road salt.
- Establish recordkeeping and annual reporting procedures.

Effective Date:

Immediately

G. Relevant Existing Laws

PennDOT is not currently required to share best practices for road salt management.

E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)

This bill has not been introduced in prior sessions.

Pennsylvania Council
Trout Unlimited
P.O. Box 5148
Bellefonte, PA 16823
www.patrout.org

The Honorable Representative Greg Vitali
30 East Wing
P.O. Box 202166
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2166

September 25, 2025

Re: House Bill 664. An Act amending the act of June 1, 1945 (P.L.1242, No.428), known as the State Highway Law, in special provisions affecting local authorities, providing for Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide.

Dear Representative Vitali,

The Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited (PATU), representing nearly 13,000 anglers and conservationists, is writing in support of House Bill 664 "An Act amending the act of June 1, 1945 (P.L.1242, No.428), known as the State Highway Law, in special provisions affecting local authorities, providing for Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide".

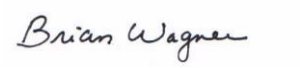
Road salt runoff introduces high concentrations of chloride into freshwater ecosystems, which harms trout by disrupting their physiology, damaging sensitive early life stages, and destroying their food sources.

- To survive in freshwater, trout must constantly regulate internal salt and ion levels through a process called osmoregulation. High chloride concentrations force the fish to expend more energy to maintain their internal fluid balance, which slows growth and makes them more vulnerable to disease and other stressors.
- Studies show that environmentally relevant levels of sodium chloride (NaCl) and calcium chloride (CaCl2) can significantly reduce the growth and mass of trout, especially during their sensitive alevin and fry stages.
- Trout eggs and young are especially vulnerable to chloride pollution because they cannot easily escape contaminated areas. High salt concentrations can hinder the development of alevin (newly hatched trout) and fry.
- Road salt negatively impacts the entire aquatic ecosystem, with ripple effects that threaten trout by destroying their habitat and food web. High chloride levels can decimate populations of macroinvertebrates like mayflies, stoneflies, and caddisflies, which are vital food sources for trout.

While PATU recognizes that public safety is always the primary goal, there are several examples of states that have adopted Road Salt Management plans maintaining public safety and reducing the environmental impacts from road salt by implementing best management practices. Maryland has seen approximately a 50% reduction in road salt usage since the Department of Transportation State Highway Administration implemented a salt management plan in 2010, leading to a significant decrease in the state's overall salt consumption for winter maintenance. This reduction was achieved through the adoption of new salt application strategies, using the right amount of salt, targeting roads in most need of treatment, using brine to reduce overall salt usage, and increasing training for equipment operators.

The Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited urges passage of HB 664 and the creation of a Road Salt Management Best Practices Guide. PATU sees it as a win for our state's fisheries, our anglers and the outdoor recreation industry without jeopardizing public safety.

Sincerely,



Brian Wagner
Conservation Chair
Pennsylvania Council
Trout Unlimited
484-894-8289

COMMITTEE DESIGNATION FORM PURSUANT TO HOUSE RULE 66(a)

HOUSE Environmental & Natural Resource Protection Committee **DESIGNATION**

(Committee Name)

On the date of _____, I hereby designate the following individual to cast my vote on any question before the committee (***check one***):

____ Representative Representative Greg Vitali, Majority Chair

____Representative Representative Jack Rader, Minority Chair

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

I hereby direct my vote be cast:

_____ in the same manner as the designated Chair.

_____ in the same manner as Representative _____ for as long as they remain present at the meeting. If my designee leaves the meeting, I do ___do not _____ direct that my vote be cast in the same manner as the designated Chair.

_____ on the following specified bills, amendments and resolutions:

_____	Y / N / Abstain	_____	Y / N / Abstain
_____	Y / N / Abstain	_____	Y / N / Abstain
_____	Y / N / Abstain	_____	Y / N / Abstain
_____	Y / N / Abstain	_____	Y / N / Abstain
_____	Y / N / Abstain	_____	Y / N / Abstain
_____	Y / N / Abstain	_____	Y / N / Abstain

_____ _____

Member's Name (Printed) Member's Signature

_____

Member's Contact Number(s) - ***Required***

September 29, 2025

Dear Majority Chairman Vitali, Minority Chairman Rader and members of the House Environmental & Natural Resource Protection,

On behalf of the statewide environmental group PennEnvironment and our citizen members across Pennsylvania, I am writing to express our support for the proposed House Bill 664, which would direct PennDOT, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection, to develop best management practices for the use and reduction of road salt in Pennsylvania

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), our waterways' salinity is increasing, putting Pennsylvania's streams at risk[1]. This is a statewide problem, with salinity increasing between 1999 and 2019 in all southeastern Pennsylvania streams surveyed,[2] while the Susquehanna River's watershed saw increasing salinity between 2001 and 2016.[3] In Philadelphia, urban streams like the Tacony Creek can run saltier than the ocean following a winter storm,[4] while Pittsburgh's Nine Mile Run has long been an example of increasing salinity after snow.[5] And the effects can be felt year round, as salt can build up in the ground water and increase the salinity of a waterway even in the summer months.[6] And once salt enters the environment, there is no effective way to remove it.

This salinization threatens the health of Pennsylvania's streams.. It kills the sensitive eggs and larvae of Pennsylvania's **fishes, frogs and salamanders**,[7] decreases both the number and diversity of our **aquatic insects** like stone and caddisflies, removing a critical food source for trout, bluegill and other native fish[8] and kills off the **freshwater mussels**.[9] At the same time, it can make the stream banks too salty for **freshwater plants** to grow, in turn removing the critical

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[1] Marissa Rossi et al, "Land development and road salt usage drive long-term changes in major-ion chemistry of streamwater in six exurban and suburban watersheds, southeastern Pennsylvania, 1999-2019," *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, Vol 11. March 25, 2023.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Rosemary Farelli et al, "Predictive Modeling Reveals Elevated Conductivity Relative to Background Levels in Freshwater Tributaries within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, USA," *ACS EST Water* 4(11): 4978–4989. October 30, 2024.
[4] Frank Kummer, "Winter road salt is making some Philly-area streams as salty as the ocean, enough to kill wildlife," *Philadelphia Inquirer.* January 11, 2022.
[5] Michael Koryak et al., "Highway Deicing Salt Runoff Events and Major Ion Concentrations along a Small Urban Stream," *Journal of Freshwater Ecology*, 16(1): March 2001.
[6] Marissa Rossi et al, "Land development and road salt usage drive long-term changes in major-ion chemistry of streamwater in six exurban and suburban watersheds, southeastern Pennsylvania, 1999-2019," Frontiers in Environmental Science, Vol 11. March 25, 2023.
[7] Marisa Baldine, "How do road salts impact Chesapeake critters?" Chesapeake Bay Program, January 30, 2023. Accessed: September 26, 2025.
[8] Haake et al., "Impacts of urbanization on chloride and stream invertebrates: A 10-year citizen science field study of road salt in stormwater runoff," *Integrative Environmental Assessment and Management.*18(6):1667–1677. April 26, 2022.
[9] R.S. Prosser et al., "Assessing the toxicity and risk of salt-impacted winter road runoff to the early life stages of freshwater mussels in the Canadian province of Ontario," *Environmental Pollution,* 230: 589-597, November 2017.

wildlife habitat and flood management provided by streambank vegetation.[10] Finally, it can increase the salinity of our drinking water, especially for the millions of Pennsylvanians who rely on well water, poses a threat to residents with conditions like hypertension and heart disease, **putting human health at risk**.[11]

In recent years, salt use has *increased* while snowfall and days below-freezing have *fallen*,[12] underscoring the need for developing direction and a clear guidance when using this product.

There are additional benefits to clearer guidelines that would help reduce salt use: **saving taxpayers and drivers money.** While PennDOT spent $42 million on road salt in 2023-24,[13] municipal and state governments, from Minnesota to Maryland, have been able to reduce expenditure on road salt through new de-icing guidelines. And there are indirect costs as well: road salt corrosion costs drivers $3 million annually in vehicle damage, while each pound of road salt used is responsible for an estimated $800-$3,000 in infrastructure damage, from corroding our water pipes and stormwater drains to accelerating rust on our bridges.[14]

Given all of this, PennEnvironment urges the House Environmental & Natural Resource Protection to approve HB 664. We thank you for considering this important issue. If you have any questions about this or other issues, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at stephanie@pennenvironment.org or 267-438-3397.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Wein
Clean Water & Conservation Advocate
PennEnvironment

[10] Hanna M Wilmert et al, "Winter road management effects on roadside soil and vegetation along a mountain pass in the Adirondack Park, New York, USA," *Journal of Environmental Management* 225: 215-223. November 1, 2018.
[11] Sara Stanley, "Road Salts Linked to High Sodium Levels in Tap Water," Eos. March 8, 2022. Accessed: September 27, 2025.
[12] Marissa Rossi et al, "Land development and road salt usage drive long-term changes in major-ion chemistry of streamwater in six exurban and suburban watersheds, southeastern Pennsylvania, 1999-2019," *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, Vol 11. March 25, 2023.
[13] Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, "PennDOT Winter Fact Sheet for 2023-2024," Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Accessed: September 26, 2025.
[14] Abby Wileman, "Salt Pollution in Our Fresh Water: A Costly Crisis for Human Health, Infrastructure and Aquatic Life," Izaak Walton League of America, December 15, 2024. Accessed September 26, 2025.