



# Ice, Ice, Baby

**H**omeowners in Southeastern Wisconsin know “Lake-effect” snowfall is wet and heavy. Failing to remove it promptly from porches, sidewalks and driveways can result in frozen lumps making snow removal more difficult later. This is a real problem when you’re pressed for time in the morning and can’t get to snow and ice removal till the end of the day. Even walking from your back door to your garage for your snow shovel can be risky.

Here are some common household items that you can use in a pinch to deice sidewalks and driveways to temporarily

reduce slips and falls:

**Table Salt** While the freezing point of freshwater is 32 degrees, adding salt lowers the freezing point to -6 degrees. In most cases, table salt’s effectiveness for deicing stops at about 15 degrees F. In very cold temperatures salt will just sit on top of ice without doing much good so sprinkling a little water on your surface before adding salt will activate its melting properties. Kosher salt is coarse and provides a bit of grittiness for added traction during the melting process.

**Alcohol** is an ingredient used in many deicing products for car windshields and

**ALWAYS AN OPTION: STAYING ON TOP OF SNOW REMOVAL ON YOUR PROPERTY WILL MAKE CLEAN UP DEEP INTO THE WINTER MUCH EASIER AND SAFER.**

keylocks. 70% Rubbing Alcohol has a freezing point at -20 degrees F. Applying it with a spray bottle to porches and stairs can be helpful in some situations.

**Windshield washer fluid** melts ice fairly quickly and can leave it slushy for a long time. However it is toxic and harmful plants and pets. Use it sparingly as a temporary solution.

**DON’T** ever use automobile antifreeze or lawn fertilizer. Both are highly poisonous to wildlife and harmful to the environment especially water supplies.

**Kitty Litter** doesn’t melt ice, but it will provide traction. Using dirt, sand and fireplace ash will also do the trick.

No matter what you spread on your walk paths to reduce slips and falls this winter, be sure to remove your shoes when you enter the house. Tracking in salt or sand might get you the “Cold Shoulder” from the person responsible for keeping the floors and carpets clean in your home. ❄️

*The Starr Group is a member of Milwaukee NARI and the recipient of the 2017 BBB Torch Award for Ethics.*

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