



Rhode Island
Department of Environmental Management
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News Release

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DEM ISSUES REMINDER TO PLAN FOR SNOW DISPOSAL SITES IN ADVANCE OF WINTER SEASON

PROVIDENCE – In advance of the winter season, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) is reminding state agencies, municipalities and businesses to begin planning for potential snow disposal sites. Finding a suitable place to store the snow collected from roadways, parking lots and sidewalks can pose a significant challenge. DEM has developed [guidelines](#) to assist these agencies with identifying, preparing and maintaining appropriate disposal sites for snow and ice.

“By working together in the state to manage snow storage this past winter, we were able to avoid depositing snow in our waterways,” said DEM Director Janet Coit. “Given the record amounts of snowfall, this was quite a feat, but extremely important to the health of our waters. Looking ahead, we encourage municipalities and businesses to once again be proactive and reach out to us for help as they begin this important planning.”

Collected snow that is contaminated by road salt, sand, litter and automotive pollutants can pose threats to the environment and public health. There are several steps that can be taken to minimize these impacts, including selecting a disposal site that is on or adjacent to a pervious surface in an upland area (such as available gravel parking areas, fields, etc.) being careful to avoid water resources and wells. In such areas, snow melt will filter into the soil, leaving behind sand and other debris which should then be removed by the spring thaw.

It is also important to prepare and maintain these sites properly by installing silt fencing or sediment barrier, installing a vegetative buffer between the site and nearby waters, and clearing away debris prior to and following using the area for snow collection.

Under normal winter conditions, storage and disposal of snow should be done exclusively in upland areas and not in or adjacent to waterbodies or wetlands. For more tips and information, including emergency disposal procedures, visit www.dem.ri.gov for the [Snow Disposal Policy](#) or contact Brian Lafaille at 222-4700 ext. 7731 or via email at brian.lafaille@dem.ri.gov.