

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-1031

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SODIUM CHLORIDE TO
MITIGATE ICE AND SNOW ACCUMULATIONS.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	27,169	37,312
UConn	Other - Cost	Up to 65,000	Up to 88,000
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	salt application account - Cost/Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Cost	65,784	90,343

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) to work with the University of Connecticut (UConn) Technical Transfer Center to conduct training for roadside salt applicators relying on municipal guidelines.

This is anticipated to result in a cost to UConn of up to \$65,000 in FY 22 and up to \$88,000 in FY 23 due to the requirements to offer an enhanced road salt application training program with additional

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.3% of payroll in FY 22 and FY 23.

training sessions. These costs may be defrayed by certification fee revenue and/or grants, as described below. The bill is also anticipated to result in costs to DEEP of \$65,784 in FY 22 (based on the bill's effective date) and \$90,343 in FY 23, plus additional fringe benefits, for an Environmental Intern to perform duties under the new certification program discussed below.

Section 1 requires DEEP and DOT to work with UConn's T2 Center to offer road salt application trainings to state, municipal, and private applicators. The bill allows the trainings to be provided by DEEP and DOT, or UConn's T2 Center.

The estimate assumes the trainings will be provided by UConn's T2 Center (instead of DEEP and DOT) because the center already offers two similar trainings annually to public sector road salt applicators. If the trainings are provided by DEEP and DOT instead of the T2 Center, then there will be minimal costs to UConn to serve in a consultative role.

It is anticipated the bill's costs to UConn, if it offers the trainings, may total up to \$65,000 in FY 22 (for nine-month costs) and \$88,000 in FY 23 (12-month costs) and annually thereafter, including fringe benefits. The costs are due to fractional (10 percent) costs for two leadership-level staff currently employed, half-time costs for a new Program Coordinator, and part-time costs for a new Instructor. The personnel-related costs across the positions are an estimated \$62,200 in FY 22 and \$85,500 in FY 23.² The estimate anticipates other program expenses of approximately \$2,500 annually.

Section 1 also requires that DEEP and DOT to report to the Environment and Transportation Committees on the training program within one year. The report must include legislative recommendations

² The fringe benefit costs for employees funded out of non-appropriated funds are generally supported by the same source of funding responsible for funding the position's salary. The estimated pension and non-pension fringe benefit cost associated with the identified personnel changes is 49.25% of payroll in FY 22 and FY 23.

to reduce the effect of sodium chloride on private wells and public drinking water supplies. This has no fiscal impact as both DEEP and DOT have the expertise to make legislative recommendations.

If UConn's T2 Center is selected by DEEP as a training provider for the voluntary certification program, then **Section 2** requires that the certification fee revenue, and/or grants, will cover the costs described above. The T2 Center currently is funded entirely by grant revenue. UConn has indicated that it will only offer the trainings if selected as a certification training provider.

Section 2 establishes a salt applicator certification program within DEEP, within available resources, and requires DEEP to adopt regulations to implement the new program. The new certification program requirements result in a cost to DEEP of \$65,784 in FY 22 and \$90,343 in FY 23, and associated fringe benefits of \$36,225 and \$37,312 respectively, to hire an Environmental Intern to issue certificates to commercial salt applicators or master certificates to businesses that apply salt to mitigate ice and snow.

Additionally, **Section 2** establishes a separate, non-lapsing "salt application account", administered by DEEP for the salt applicator certification program. Fees collected under the new program must be deposited into this account. This provision results in fees flowing into (a revenue gain) and expenses being paid out from (costs), the newly established account. The bill specifies that fees must cover the costs of training.³

Section 3 exempts a DEEP-certified commercial applicator, and any owner, occupant, or lessee of land maintained by the certified applicator, from liability for damages arising from an insufficiency or hazard on the property under certain conditions if records are kept. This is not expected to have a fiscal impact to the state or

³ The bill specifies that the Treasurer may invest funds in the newly established "salt applicator" account, as under current practice, and any investment interest must be credited to that account. Also, the bill specifically prohibits the General Fund from being used for the salt applicator certification program.

municipalities as public entities are anticipated to maintain their properties to avoid gross negligence (i.e. properly treated surfaces for ice and snow).

Additionally, **Section 4** requires each local health district, by January 1, 2022, to establish an electronic reporting system for owners of homes and wells damaged by sodium chloride run-off. This requirement has no fiscal impact, as local health districts can establish these reporting systems within existing resources.

Lastly, **Section 5** requires anyone who installs residential water treatment systems to test drinking water for sodium and chloride before recommending an automatic water softener or tank. This has no fiscal impact to the state or municipalities, as the provision applies to private, third-parties.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.