

Salt in the Neshaminy: What We're Seeing and Why It Matters

A Brief Community Science Summary (2023–2025)

Road salt keeps our roads safe, but it also washes into nearby streams, where it can harm aquatic life and affect drinking water. Since 2023, the Neshaminy Watershed Association has been working with the Stroud Water Research Center and community volunteers to measure chloride levels throughout the Neshaminy Creek watershed.

What We Did

- Collected summer baseline samples in 2023 and 2025
- Expanded monitoring to include smaller streams and drought conditions
- Conducted winter “Salt Watch” sampling with community volunteers
- Shared data through public maps and regional databases

What We Found

- Average baseline chloride levels increased by about **45%** from 2023 to 2025
- Winter storms caused sharp chloride spikes, with some streams exceeding **500 ppm**
- Small streams near roads and parking areas were most affected
- Nearly all sites showed higher chloride in winter than in summer
- Some locations also exceeded drinking water standards for nitrate

Why It Matters

High chloride levels can harm fish and insects, damage infrastructure, and affect drinking water. The results show that salt pollution is becoming a year-round issue, not just a winter problem.

What's Next

We will continue monitoring, expand community participation, and work with local partners to reduce unnecessary salt use while keeping communities safe.

Get Involved

Community science makes this work possible. If you’re interested in helping monitor local streams or learning more about salt reduction, we invite you to get involved.