

Robin Coleman of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) speaks about snow and road chemicals:

Video: VDOT workers walking outside at VDOT facility

Audio: “We’re constantly checking the pavement in the parking lot. Pavement out here... sidewalks...”

Video: On camera - Robin Coleman, Maintenance Superintendent, Bon Air Area Headquarters, VDOT

Audio: “Anything to give us an idea that it’s adhering to the pavement or the concrete.”

Video: VDOT workers readying snow plowing equipment, VDOT snow plow driver climbing up to hood of truck and clearing snow from wipers. Footage of snow plows plowing snow day and night.

Audio: “If it’s around the 30 degree range to freezing, maybe 33, 34 degrees salt melts snow pretty well. But, that said, we also add a little bit of sand treated with magnesium chloride flake which does two things – it helps melt the ice, but it also provides traction. IN the event that plain salt might thaw the bridge out then re-freeze right behind – slicker than it may have been in the first place. As the temperature goes down into the 20s salt will still melt the snow, but it’ll re-freeze nearly immediately. The magnesium chloride flake on the other hand will melt ice and snow at a lower temperature down closer to 20 degrees.”

Video: Footage of giant snow blower clearing 4-5 foot snow drifts from a mountain road with the wind blowing powdery snow across the scene

Audio: “In the event that it’s below 20 degrees, lots of times we don’t put anything down because it’s blowing around on the pavement and doesn’t adhere to the pavement that well. If you try and melt it, it will adhere to it.”

Video: VDOT equipment operators in a safety meeting before heading out to plow snow

Audio: “VDOT employees take pride in their work and just cleaning a ditch or patching a pothole doesn’t make much of an impression on a lot of people.”

Video: Footage of VDOT worker plowing snow shot from inside cab.

Audio: “But, something of the magnitude of being responsible for clearing a primary or major secondary to allow safe travel... it does give them a certain feeling of accomplishment – like they’ve actually done something... a big thing to help the public.”