

'Ice-Slicer' a hit with city official

By Pat Blair

Senior staff reporter

A new de-icing material being tested in Sheridan "sure seems to do the job," according to Assistant Public Works Director/Engineering Ross Besson, who said street crews will probably be using more of the product in future.

Called "Ice-Slicer," the substance is billed by its manufacturers as being 280 percent less corrosive than salt and is designed to penetrate and dissolve snowpack and ice.

Besson said city crews have used "Ice-Slicer" twice this year — the second time on Tuesday. The first time, he said in an interview this week, was a few weeks ago when rain followed by freezing temperatures left a sheet of ice on city streets.

Based on those two experiences, Besson is impressed. "I think we'll be increasing the area we use it on," he said.

The city gives priority to hills and heavily-trafficked intersections. Ice-Slicer has been used on the South Main hill, Thurmond hill, the hill on Highland Avenue, Eighth and 11th streets and on hills in the newly-paved special improvement districts, Besson said.

The substance also has been used on intersections in downtown Sheridan and on streets such as Fifth, Loucks and Coffeen Avenue.

"We're still experimenting with how much (Ice-Slicer) we put down," he added.

Ice-Slicer is not a brand new product, but it has never been used in Sheridan until this year when the city ordered 125 tons of the substance. Manufactured by Envirotech

Services Inc., the material uses all-natural ingredients, does not chemically attack concrete surfaces and is reported to be "very low" in corrosive action on aluminum, steel, zinc-plated steel and paints.

Besson, who attended a seminar on the product in Denver earlier this year, told Sheridan's city council at a meeting in October that the material was used in tests in Aurora, Fort Collins and Loveland, Colo., and representatives in those cities said they would continue to use the product "because of its superior working ability and less overall costs."

Ice-Slicer also has been used in Mills and has received favorable recommendations from city officials there.

The new material is more expensive than the Realite sand the city of Sheridan has been using in recent years, according to Public Works Director Susan Fields, but the higher cost — \$77.75 per ton compared to \$64 per ton for the sand — is offset by the fact that less Ice-Slicer is needed and because the substance dissolves.

That last feature means that city crews do not have to run street sweepers to clean up residue as must be done with the sand.

In a memo to city officials in October, Besson said he expects Ice-Slicer to become a "major part" of the city's anti-icing/de-icing program — but that probably will not happen this winter because the city still has some of the Realite sand left over.

Fields said earlier this week that the city "really has not used a lot" of the Ice-Slicer to date "because we're using up the stuff (the sand) that we had on hand."