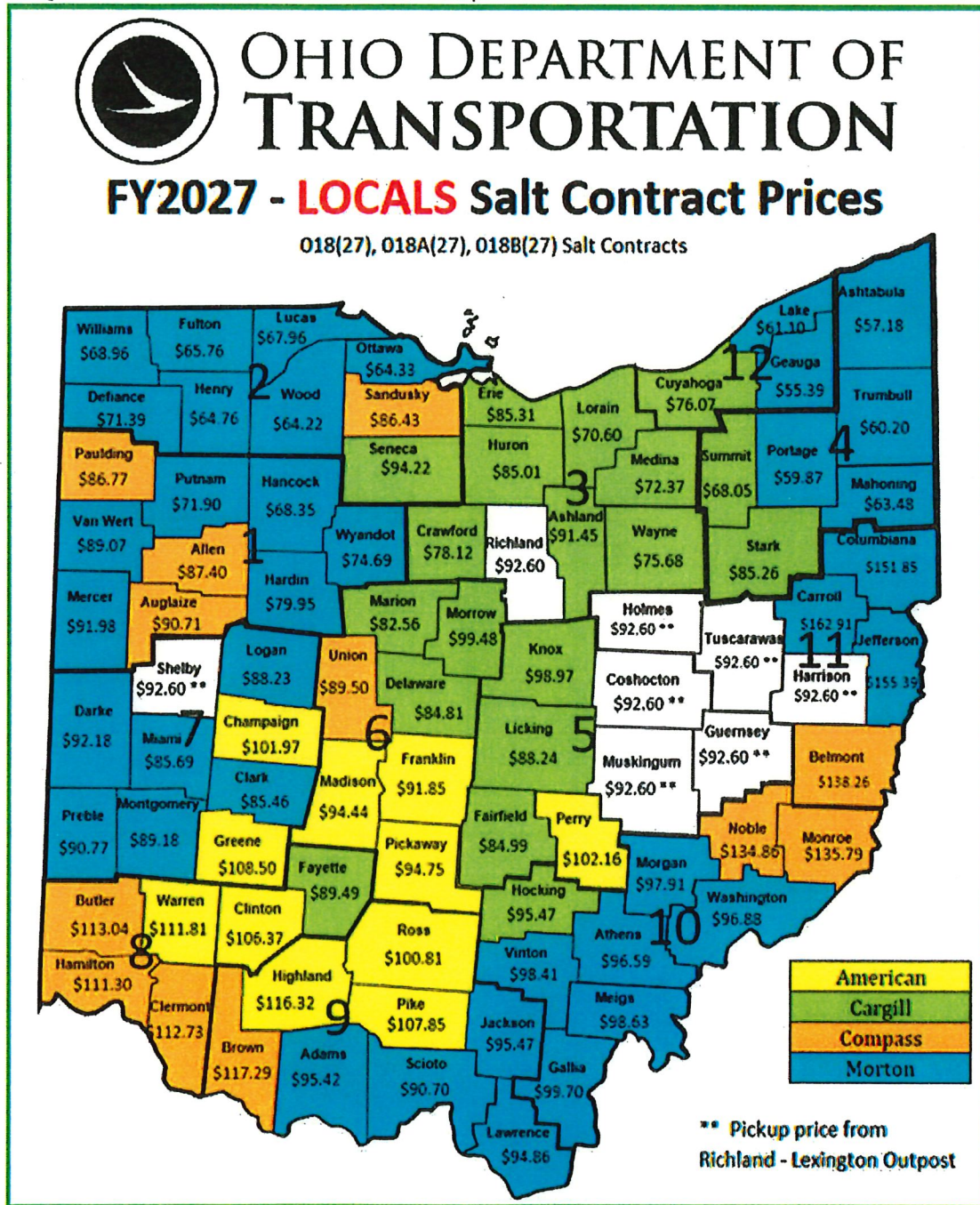


Winter Road Salt – Local Agency Frequently Asked Questions (2026–2027)

Section 1: Questions About the Overall State of Affairs for Salt This Winter Season

- **Question:** What's happening right now with the salt contracts?
Answer: ODOT has completed a third round of salt contract bidding with multiple vendors (Compass, Cargill, Morton, American).
- **Question:** What are the current salt prices for Locals?



- Question:** Is Ohio the only state facing salt shortages or high prices?

Answer: No, not at all. Ohio is not the only state dealing with salt supply challenges or elevated costs. Across the U.S. and Canada, salt supply and demand have been under significant pressure, especially following the severe winter season prior to this bidding cycle, which triggered regional shortages, demand surges, and logistical constraints. New York experienced a critical salt shortage, requiring emergency imports and facing price spikes. Other regions — including Ontario and the Northeastern U.S. — saw major supply chain disruptions and higher costs due to extreme weather and transportation challenges. National analyses confirm that Ohio's situation fits into this larger national pattern, not an isolated issue.
- Question:** Why are prices so high this year?

Answer: Nationally, the salt market has been stressed by regional shortages, elevated freight and energy costs, and the severe winter season prior to this bidding cycle, which drove demand spikes and created significant supply chain constraints.
- Question:** Can vendors just produce more salt?

Answer: No, salt supply cannot simply be increased on demand. National reports note that while U.S. production is stable, supply is still limited by mining capacity, weather impacts on solar salt production, and transportation constraints. Even with strong annual production, regional shortages still occur due to winter severity and logistical bottlenecks.
- Question:** Why are we not receiving bids in some counties?

Answer: ODOT is not entirely sure why vendors chose not to submit bids for certain counties. Vendors do not provide formal explanations for non-participation. However, several likely contributing factors could explain why some areas went unbid: Vendors may have had production limitations or constraints in their supply lines during this cycle. Other states and regions were competing for the same salt supply, especially after the previous difficult winter, which strained inventories nationwide. The timing of bid rounds may not have aligned with vendor logistics, hauling capacity, or internal scheduling. Because vendors independently decide where to bid, based on their own production, priorities, and operational limitations, ODOT cannot pinpoint a single cause. This combination of factors created a highly unique situation, resulting in some counties going unbid this year.

Section 2: Questions About the Current State of the Bidding Process

- Question:** What's happening right now with the salt contracts?

Answer: ODOT has completed a third round of salt contract bidding with multiple vendors (Compass, Cargill, Morton, American).

- **Question:** Why did ODOT have to go out for *three* rounds of salt bidding?
Answer: ODOT issued multiple rounds of bidding because not all counties received valid bids in the earlier rounds.
- **Question:** Has ODOT ever needed to go out for *three* rounds of salt bidding before?
Answer: No. This situation is highly unique. ODOT typically completes salt procurement in one round. These circumstances led ODOT to continue bidding until all local agencies had at least one purchasable option, whether through delivery or centralized pickup.
- **Question:** What if my county did not receive a direct bid?
Answer: Counties shown as “white” on the map located on page 1 (Holmes, Tuscarawas, Coshocton, Muskingum, Guernsey, Harrison) did not receive a direct vendor bid. The locals were offered the option to purchase salt at ~\$92/ton, but are required to pick up their salt at the Richland centralized dump site: 808 Kochheiser Road, Bellville, OH 44813.
- **Question:** Which counties require travel for pickup (no direct delivery)?
Answer: Local Agencies in Guernsey, Holmes, Muskingum, Coshocton, Tuscarawas, Harrison, and Richland will need to travel to a centralized site for pickup.

Section 3: Questions Related to the Third Bidding Cycle

- **Question:** How will ODOT document salt pickup for agencies that must collect their material from the Richland site?
Answer: For agencies participating in the third round who must pick up salt at the Richland centralized dump site (808 Kochheiser Road, Bellville, OH), ODOT will document each pickup using loader scales that produce an electronic printout. This printed scale ticket will serve as official documentation of the quantity picked up.
- **Question:** Why is the Richland County site the only location available for salt pickup in the third round of bids?
Answer: ODOT originally requested three centralized dump sites (Guernsey County – Cambridge and Tuscarawas County – New Philadelphia) for the third round to provide multiple pickup options. However, only the Richland County location received a vendor bid. Because it was the sole site bid on in the contract, it became the only available pickup location for agencies without a direct delivery option.
- **Question:** When will salt be available for the third round of bids?
Answer: Based on the third-round contracts, salt availability and deliveries are expected after January 15, 2027 (mid-January).
- **Question:** What if I need my salt now?

Answer: ODOT will work with Locals to provide salt earlier to ensure operational needs are met.

- **Question:** Can agencies get hauling if they must pick up at the Richland County site?

Answer: If your agency is looking for hauling options, you can search out with haulers on your own, or ODOT's 101G contract includes a hauling price. But agencies that did not receive a direct bid in the third round of bids will be required to pick up salt at the Richland County site.

- **Question:** Will ODOT be handling these hauling contracts?

Answer: No, ODOT will not be handling these hauling contracts.

- **Question:** Do I have to pick up all my salt at one time?

Answer: No. Agencies do *not* need to pick up all their salt in a single trip.

- **Question:** What is the logistics for ordering and coordinating pickup at the Richland County dump site?

Answer: ODOT is still working through the logistics for the third-round pickup process. Because this is a new and unique situation, the detailed procedures are still being developed and will be communicated to local agencies as soon as they are finalized. What we do know at this time is that pickup will occur at the Richland County centralized dump site, and ODOT will use loader scales with electronic printouts to document quantities during each pickup. Additional coordination steps — such as scheduling, sequencing, and on-site traffic flow — will be shared with agencies once the process is fully established.

- **Question:** How will logistics information be communicated?

Answer: Logistics details will be communicated through the email on file from ODOT's Operations Central Office Section, including confirmation of tonnage, pickup instructions, and scheduling updates.

- **Question:** Who do we contact to verify information on tonnage and pricing?

Answer: Please contact ODOT's Dean Alatsis to verify your tonnage and pricing.

- **Question:** Is ODOT paying the same prices as local agencies, and does ODOT also have to haul salt for the third-round pickups?

Answer: Yes. ODOT is in the same situation as local agencies in counties that did not receive direct bids. ODOT also pays the same bid-established pricing and must handle hauling for counties that did not receive a direct bid price. The third-round conditions apply to ODOT and locals whenever delivery is not part of the awarded bid.

- **Question:** What are the next steps?

Answer: Your next step is to contact ODOT Legislative Services if you need more information, have questions about your county's situation, or would like to request a meeting to discuss the salt contract process. ODOT appreciates your patience as we work through this unique, multi-round bidding cycle and finalize procedures for ordering, logistics, and documentation.