

Letters to the editor

Telluride Daily Planet Jan 30,2004

More on mag

Dear Editor,

Concerning the article about mag chloride in the Jan. 27 edition of the Daily Planet, I would like to add a few bytes of information concerning this obnoxious chemical.

The Coloradans for Safe Winter Driving coalition was not founded for public education on Colorado Department of Transportation's winter highway maintenance, but for outright propaganda and cleverly disguised lies about its use, its effect on the environment, its true safety factor and its real effectiveness.

It does not clean up the air. In the years prior to its use cinders were used as a spreading agent for traction, and when the sun came out, melting. It worked quite well and we could get around just as well and it didn't make the roads as slippery as mag does. In those days if you were 100 yards behind a vehicle, traveling on a wet winter highway, your windshield stayed fairly clear. The spray from tires settled back to the road. With mag chloride the spray plus the mag chloride stays suspended in the air much longer and dirties your windshield if you're a quarter of a mile behind another vehicle. So much for cleaner air, as you are now breathing all the caustic metals from the mag chloride. Plus, with its use on elevated highways with power lines nearby, the salt suspended in the air has shorted across insulators on power poles and has caused the poles to catch fire. I really want that in my lungs.

The study CDOT is doing is result specific and will be biased toward the use of mag chloride. It won't say the trees are being killed, only "premature browning," (read: dying). It won't show entrance into ground water, streams and rivers. It will be the view that they are using now in taxpayer-funded ads and billboards slanted to its use with totally inaccurate information. It's another instance of government using our money and the censored media to misinform the taxpaying public.

One final rant, it does affect the running of the engine in your vehicle. I have seen numerous instances where vehicles have quit running in the middle of traffic due to mag chloride. Sure, it doesn't stop pistons from going up and down and valves from opening and closing, but all the supportive ignition wiring corrodes, sensor connectors, computer grounds (very important) and most electrical connectors corrode and in some instances rot away altogether. Thus adding to the maintenance and cost of vehicle repair. The more electrical stuff on your vehicle, the more the use of mag chloride will cost you in repair/maintenance bills.

If you want some background on mag chloride, go to the EPA's Toxic Net, which is where the EPA lists this chemical. Kinda says something, doesn't it?

Joe Kray

Joe's Garage

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