

# Measure your opportunity

First step in SWiM policy clears the path to continuous improvement



“That which is measured, improves.” Some people attribute this quote to Karl Pearson, founder of mathematical statistics. Others attribute it to Peter Drucker, a well-known management consultant and thinker who is often quoted as saying that “you can’t manage what you can’t measure.” What Drucker means is it is not possible to know whether you are successful unless success is defined and tracked (measured).

Measuring is a primary requirement for managing any continuous improvement (CI) process initiative. You must always measure what you want to improve. In a CI model, measuring is the last step for assessing your results. In the Sustainable Winter Management (SWiM) model, “Measure” is the first step that then enables you to identify opportunities for improvement, which may include equipment or labor efficiencies or savings in the cost and amount of materials, including deicing salt applications.

This same policy applies whether you are managing parking lot or roadway conditions.

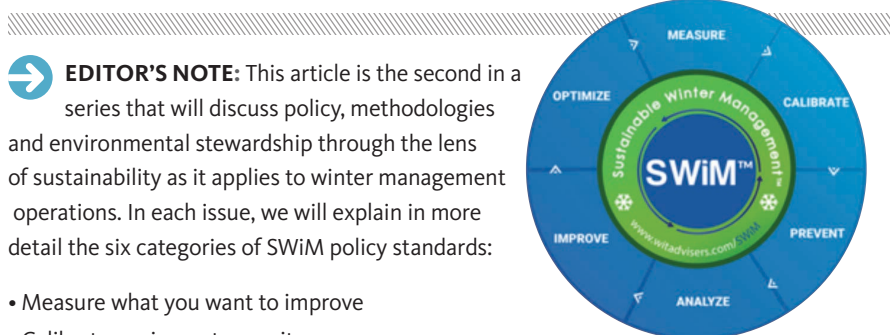
## What to measure

**Area.** Measure the square footage and acreage of parking lot(s), sidewalks and lane miles of roadways. Compare your production and application rates with industry guidelines, such as those published by SIMA. For example, the SIMA guidelines include scenarios of average times required for plowing an acre of parking lot, shoveling 1,000 linear feet of sidewalk and the average quantity of time and salt required for anti-icing and deicing applications.

**Rates.** Salt application rate guidelines have been established through the Sustainable Salt Initiative. It’s important to always measure surface temperatures (in addition to air temperatures) when deciding which application rates to utilize.

**Output.** Measure salt application rate output per application. Salt measuring technology and cloud-based, GPS-enabled tracking software, are available that makes measuring salt applications easy and affordable.

**Level of Service (LOS).** Measure LOS expectations and results. This can be achieved using site cameras or assigning



**EDITOR’S NOTE:** This article is the second in a series that will discuss policy, methodologies and environmental stewardship through the lens of sustainability as it applies to winter management operations. In each issue, we will explain in more detail the six categories of SWiM policy standards:

- Measure what you want to improve
- Calibrate equipment capacity, manpower, response times, salt and other materials
- Prevent bonding of snow and ice, waste, re-work and safety incidents
- Analyze Level of Service, data and variances
- Improve safety, Level of Service, productivity
- Optimize equipment, materials, time and data

→ SIMA members can access the production rate guidelines by logging in at [my.sima.org](http://my.sima.org)

Application rate guidelines are available at [www.witadvisers.com/sustainable-salt-initiative](http://www.witadvisers.com/sustainable-salt-initiative)

someone to visually observe and document snow operations, including pictures for reference. It’s important to understand when LOS expectations are being met and when they are perhaps being over-served, which typically includes over-applying salt.

## Improvement initiatives

A CI process utilizing SWiM measuring guidelines and tools provides opportunities for companies to develop improvement initiatives throughout winter management operation, including reducing safety incidents, increasing material usage efficiency and inventory tracking, improving LOS and quality performance, and growing profit by focusing on wasted expenses and production efficiencies you can identify when you measure and compare hours.

Regardless of property type, the standards of policy are consistent for developing a sustainable winter management program. Following the SWiM guidelines in their proper order, by beginning with “Measure” and holding maintenance operations accountable to continuously implement the SWiM standards of practices, are important to manage for achieving similar results and benefits. **SB\***

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