



Council's starved of salt

Councils facing a critical shortage of salt supplies to grit UK roads have been met with suppliers unable to meet with demand.

APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) which has set up an emergency salt brokerage service for councils, has found local councils have only received partial deliveries of salt orders or no delivery at all from suppliers.

Commenting Paul O'Brien Chief Executive of APSE said: '**Local Council's are now facing critical shortages that could grind huge swathes of the nation's road infrastructure to a standstill. For days now APSE has been working with our member local authorities, particularly in the Midlands, Yorkshire and Wales in an attempt to ensure supplies reach those areas most in need. However, suppliers have been unable to keep up with demand or claim that they are contractually bound to other agencies.**'

- Many councils are unable to store large quantities of salt which can become unusable if subject to the elements. Even those councils with large salt barn storage facilities have experienced shortages due to the extraordinary weather conditions.
- Salt can be produced within the UK but there is also a large reliance on imported salt with some supplies arriving in the UK from Spain and from Ireland.
- Councils have even explored the use of other materials to try and ensure major routes remain passable.

O'Brien added: '**The time for talking has passed we need co-ordinated action from public agencies, suppliers and local authorities to prioritise, share resources and supplies – any other response just isn't good enough.**'

Ends

Notes to editors

- APSE is the Association for Public Service Excellence which works with over 300 councils throughout the UK including those with Highways responsibilities
- The Highways Agency is responsible for the UK's motorway networks whilst local councils must keep clear major routes that are not part of the motorway network

- The Highways Agency issued a press statement to APSE to say that it had reduced its stock reserves from six days to five days to free up more salt for use by local councils but so far this has not filtered through meaning some councils risk running out of salt completely .
- Many councils have already rationed the numbers of routes that can be covered by gritting services with the Midlands currently reporting the most severe shortages.
- For more information please contact Mo Baines at APSE on 0161 772 1810 or mobile 07971 843515

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