Planting near a sidewalk, road, or parking lot where salt is spread to melt winter ice?

Long after the snow and ice from these surfaces has melted away, much of the salt is left behind in nearby soil. The unnaturally high salinity at these sites interferes with plants' ability to take up water and nutrients, forcing them to experience artificial "drought," even when plenty of moisture is available. Plants that naturally thrive in poor, dry soil are the most likely to be successful where ice melt salt is applied. The following drought-tolerant plants are generally recognized for good performance in moderately saline soil:

<u>Perennials</u>
Anise Hyssop (*Agastache)*
Aster
Baby's Breath (*Gypsophila*)
Beebalm (*Monarda*)
Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia*)
Bluestar *(Amsonia)*
Calamint *(Calamintha)*
Candytuft *(Iberis)*
Catmint *(Nepeta)*
Columbine *(Aquilegia)*
Daylily (*Hemerocallis*)
Hen & Chicks (*Sempervivum*)
Lilyturf (*Liriope*)
Ornamental Chives *(Allium)*
Ornamental Grasses
Pinks (*Dianthus*)
Russian Sage *(Pervoskia)*
Sea Thrift (*Armeria*)
Stonecrop (*Sedum*)
Silvermound (*Artemisia*)
Yarrow (*Achillea*)

Symptoms of salt toxicity in plants include lack of vigor, discoloration, damaged/burned appearance, or bud failure. Getting your soil tested is the only way to be sure that high salinity is to blame for these symptoms. Soil testing services are available through the Michigan State University Extension (https://homesoiltest.msu.edu).

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