

Unusually Green!

By Jon Baggett

“Green is the New Normal.” That was the headline of a recent article I read commemorating the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day back on April 22nd. In the article, Michael Kempner, President/CEO of MWW Group public relations firm in New Jersey, authored the following statement: “Despite all of the acrimony over climate change legislation and global warming science, one thing is clear: Our country understands the critical need to protect the environment...consumers demand it, and the private sector has embraced it.” There’s been a shift in focus from indifference towards the environment to a healthy concern for it – and corporate America has become an active member for its cause.

Asphalt sometimes gets a bad environmental rap, primarily because of its association with petroleum/fossil fuel products, and in the desert, for its contribution to the heat island effect. Unfortunately, most people are not aware of how truly “green” the asphalt business can be in the hands of environmentally responsible companies and informed buyers.

America’s Most Recycled Product

According to the Federal Highway Administration and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, over 80 million of the 100 million tons of asphalt pavement removed each year during widening and resurfacing projects is reused to create new roads, roadbeds, shoulders and embankments. That’s an 80% recycling rate – a significant effort compared with the 28% recycling rate of post-consumer products in our country’s municipal solid waste stream.

According to Figure A, the volume of recycled asphalt pavement is...

- 13 times greater than recycling of newsprint
- 27 times greater than recycling of glass bottles
- 89 times greater than recycling of aluminum cans
- 267 times greater than recycling of plastic containers

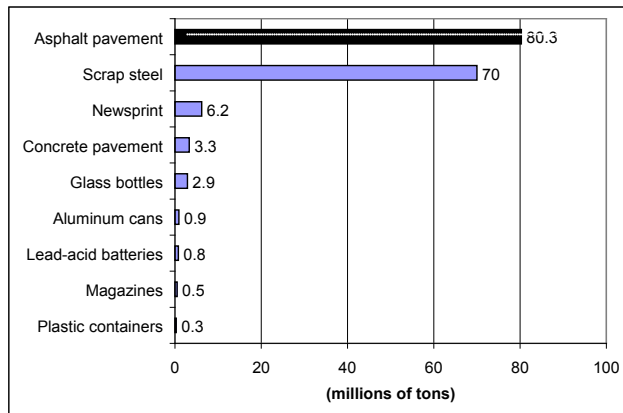


Figure A

Where the Asphalt Meets the Road

According to the Asphalt Pavement Alliance, nearly 94% of the paved roads in the U.S. are surfaced with asphalt – not to mention the numerous parking lots that abound. With this much product out there, the industry provides alternative resurfacing solutions for you that are eco-friendly and cost effective:

- *Milling*: this technique involves the grinding down of the deteriorated pavement surface to a controlled depth prior to overlaying with new or recycled asphalt.
- *Pulverization (or rubblization)*: this solution involves the removal of the deteriorated asphalt pavement, as well as the old base material, and grinds them together to provide a recycled usable base for the new asphalt surface.

By virtually eliminating the need for total pavement removal and reconstruction, these sustainable solutions can save you significant money in material hauling & disposal, equipment costs, and fees associated with virgin materials.

We’re on It

Many companies within the asphalt paving industry are committed to reducing our environmental impact through the increased use of responsible materials and practices. For Ace Asphalt of Arizona, employing sustainable solutions has been the norm for years in our everyday business operations:

- We use recycled asphalt from existing paved surfaces in greater than 90% of our construction projects.
- Proper dust control and storm water pollution prevention strategies are used on every job site.
- Our fleet is required to use ultra-low sulfur diesel to fuel equipment, reducing levels of harmful emissions into the environment.
- Systems are in place on our fleet vehicles to remotely monitor idling. This conserves fuel and lowers emissions.
- All hazardous materials are disposed of through licensed HAZMAT contractors.
- All common area lighting in our facilities are on motion detectors to conserve energy.
- Our estimator and project management vehicle fleet is converting to hybrid vehicles to conserve fuel and emissions.

Please help us support more green practices in the industry by asking how to have recycled materials be used for your next paving project, and by demanding to only work with companies who are taking steps to reduce their wear and tear on our precious environment.

About Ace Asphalt

Family owned and operated since 1966, Ace Asphalt is one of the largest parking lot construction and maintenance companies in the U.S. and the largest in Arizona. For more information, visit our website at www.aceasphalt.com or contact us at (602) 243-4100. Lic. # ROC090990-A, ROC166913-C13