

OHIO ASPHALT

The Journal of Ohio's Asphalt Professionals

ISSUE 4 • VOLUME 22

WINTER 2025

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Discover the year's asphalt training and educational opportunities in Ohio on Page 6.



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The Journal of Ohio's Asphalt Professionals

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- 6 THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE**
- 8 ODOT UPDATE – 1ST HALF 2026**
- 10 OHIO ASPHALT EXPO 2026 SET FOR MARCH 17 & 18**
- 11 FPO MEMBER INFORMATION REQUEST**
- 12 BMD REIMAGINED**
- 14 WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO CHOOSE WISELY – PART 2**
- 16 CHLORINATED SOLVENT UPDATE:
ATTENTION LABORATORY PERSONNEL, QC MANAGERS, TECHNICIANS**
- 16 TRUCKERS RELEASE 2025 HIGHWAY REPORT CARD**
- 17 NAPA ANNOUNCES 2026-2028 STATE ADVISORS**
- 18 MARK YOUR CALENDARS**
- 19 INDEX TO ADVERTISERS**

Connect on   

ON THE COVER: OHIO IN 2026 IS LOOKING LIKE THE PLACE TO BE WHEN IT COMES TO ASPHALT EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS, EXPOS, CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS. SEE PAGES 6 & 7 AND 18.



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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE



ANDREW GALL

PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“2026 appears to be a very exciting and informative year for asphalt training and education in Ohio. Planning for all these events is currently underway. Look for additional information on all these events in future issues of *Ohio Asphalt* or visit FPO’s webpage for up-to-date details regarding all of the year’s training and educational opportunities.”

A Look Ahead to 2026: Ohio is the Place for Asphalt Education

The official state tourism slogan, "Ohio, The Heart of it All," highlights our Midwest location as one with something to offer everyone – from attracting new businesses to providing economic and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. In 2026, Ohio will be the heart of asphalt education and events. With Flexible Pavements of Ohio (FPO) training and conferences combined with national events throughout the year, there will be plenty of opportunities to learn about the latest in our industry.

Throughout the year, FPO conducts annual training to comply with Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Specifications by administering courses for Field Quality Control Supervisor Training, Level 2 Asphalt Technician and Comprehensive Mix Design training for asphalt producers, contractors, engineering consultants and governmental agencies. FPO is expanding these offerings to provide training for industry personnel and consultants to receive ODOT approval for measuring density in the field. This training will cover the proper use of density gauges, proper methods for handling pavement cores and other related issues, which will allow the industry to expand our workforce with approved personnel who perform these functions but do not meet the requirements or have a need for the other technician

approvals currently recognized by ODOT.

In February, state and local government engineers and technicians, consultants, contractors and university researchers will gather for the annual Ohio Asphalt Paving Conference. This conference celebrated its 50th year in 2025 and continues as a highly popular event for asphalt practitioners. Consider attending for practical information and technologies on the design, construction and maintenance of asphalt pavements.

The Asphalt EXPO in March is Ohio's premier asphalt event, with educational sessions, scholarship presentations and the annual Quality Asphalt Paving Awards. This event features an indoor and outdoor trade show and exhibition and includes plenty of networking opportunities. This day-and-a-half event provides Ohio's asphalt contractors and specifiers with relevant information on new industry initiatives, materials and construction best practices. The 2026 program features nationally renowned experts presenting a range of relevant industry topics. The Ohio Asphalt EXPO will provide attendees with valuable insight into the practices and technological advances shaping the future of the asphalt industry.

New for Ohio in 2026, Ohio University and ODOT are jointly hosting a workshop in June, titled

“Constructing Resilient and Sustainable Transportation Infrastructure for Ohio’s Future,” in Columbus. This workshop will focus on construction practices and design methodologies to create a more resilient and sustainable transportation infrastructure. Although this workshop will be comprehensive in nature, covering a variety of roadway and structure related items, there will be several presentations on asphalt pavement design and construction. In addition, presentations will be offered on topics such as Ohio’s success with design and construction strategies that have improved the life and performance of our asphalt pavements.

In addition to Ohio-based events, the national asphalt community will be visiting the state in 2026. The National Asphalt Pavement Association’s (NAPA) 2026 Midyear Meeting will be held in Columbus in July. The NAPA Midyear Meeting consists of three days of committee meetings and educational sessions focused on advancing the asphalt pavement industry. Throughout this meeting, NAPA leadership gathers member input that will help impact the strategic national direction of our industry. I strongly urge you take advantage of this unique opportunity.

In August, the Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO) Annual Conference will be held in Cincinnati. MAASTO is the regional organization of state departments of transportation from 10 Midwestern states operating under the larger national organization of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. ODOT is the host organization and is actively planning this event.

Later in the year, the Consortium for Asphalt Pavement Research and Implementation (CAPRI) will be traveling to Ohio for its fall meeting. This organization, which FPO is a participating member, was founded in 2020 with the goal of bringing industry stakeholders together to identify, research and deploy

information to improve asphalt pavements. The current CAPRI Chairman is Ohio’s Eric Biehl, P.E., who serves as State Asphalt Materials Engineer.

2026 appears to be a very exciting and informative year for asphalt training and education in Ohio. Planning for all these events is currently underway. Look for additional information on all these events in future issues of *Ohio Asphalt*, or visit FPO’s webpage for up-to-date details regarding all the year’s training and educational opportunities.

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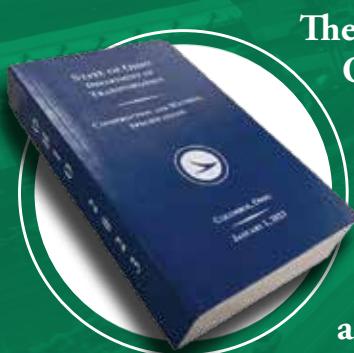
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ODOT UPDATE - 1ST HALF 2026



The information in this Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Update, as well as subsequent Update articles, includes various items addressed in ODOT Asphalt Specification Meetings, e-mail notices to Industry and other pertinent communications that are expected to have an impact upon how asphalt concrete is produced and placed on projects.

Note that significant specification changes are listed below except for some minor Location and Design (L&D) Manual changes having little to no impact on asphalt. If any of the current spec changes appear to be concerning or troublesome, Flexible Pavements of Ohio (FPO) staff encourage you to review the January 1st Half 2026 specification changes (SS-800) via the ODOT website or the QR Code below for clarification; or contact FPO for additional information.



See SS-800 (1-16-26)

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Ohio Asphalt

402.03 Calibration

- Updated to reflect present-day plant operations, and references new calibration methods in S1101

402.04.D RAP and RAS QC and Management Requirements

- RAP testing frequency and tolerances updated to coincide with guidance in July 23, 2025 email from D. Miller/ J. Bowman

702.01 Asphalt Binders

- Updated AASHTO standard
- 5.5 – Added use of ash content test per AASHTO T111 in lieu of solubility test that requires use of trichloroethylene (TCE)

702.04 Emulsified Asphalts

- Updated to allow either Saybolt Fural test for viscosity or Rotational Paddle Viscometer in 2026. Requires use of Rotational Paddle Viscometer in 2027

702.07 Asphalt Emulsion MWS

- Added new row to AASHTO T 59 requirements: Rotational paddle viscosity...

702.12-1 TABLE 702.12-1

- Added use of rotational paddled testing for viscosity
- Added 3 new requirements for non-tracking tack based on recent ROC research and to bring into alignment with surrounding states' specifications (Ash Content, Penetration, Softening Point)

Table 702.16 Polymer Emulsified Binder

- added new rows for Rotational Paddle Viscosity, Ash Content

Supplemental Specification 888 – High Friction

Surface Treatment

- Updated AASHTO reference for the binder resin system

PN 150 – Digital Data For Asphalt, Aggregate and Concrete Material Ticketing Utilizing E-Ticketing Portal

- Proposal note updates include concrete batch tickets and aggregate delivery tickets as well as asphalt material weight tickets

Supplement 1033 – Determining the Cracking Resistance of Asphalt Mixtures Using the Indirect Tensile Asphalt Cracking Test

- Correction to 1033.03 B. 2. – The July 2024 posting was posted incorrectly

Supplement 1101 – Asphalt Concrete Mixing Plants

- Updated to ensure asphalt weight ticket requirements are consistent across ODOT E-ticketing platform

Supplement 1128 – Requirements for Non-Tracking Tack Approval

- 1128.02 A. 3. – revised set time from 15 minutes to 30 minutes
- 1128.03 A. 3. – Revised sample submission from four to five one-quart samples

The Second Half 2026 Asphalt Specification Meeting is expected to be scheduled sometime in June.

Contact FPO with any questions or if you would like additional information.

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More Information to Come



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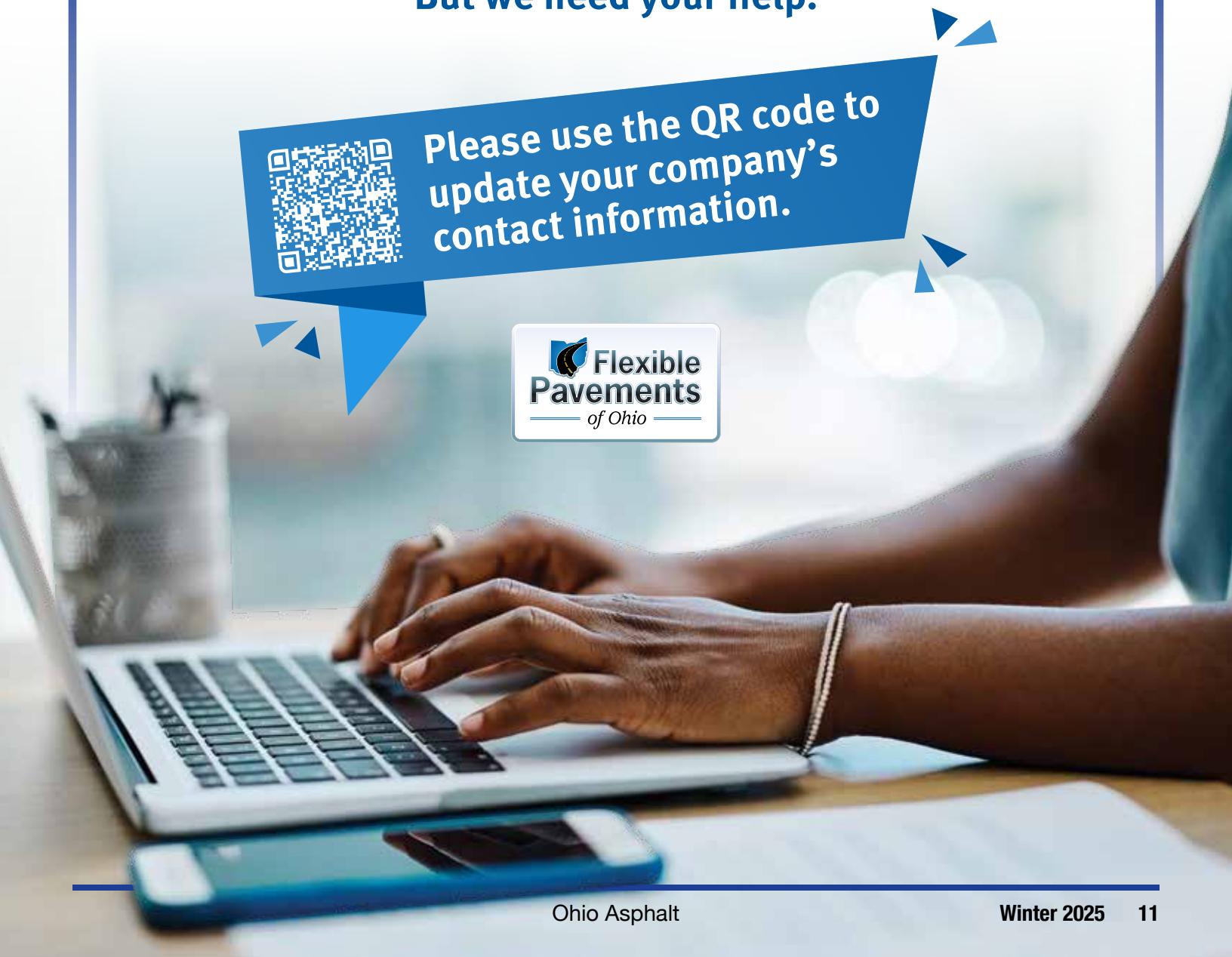
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BMD REIMAGINED



You're probably wondering: How can Balanced Mix Design (BMD) be reimaged when it hasn't been officially implemented in Ohio? Sure, the state is doing some performance testing on select mixes/projects and it has research underway to determine appropriate BMD testing thresholds or goals for future implementation. However, most practitioners would agree that the state has quite a way to go before officially adopting BMD principles. But Ohio's official position on BMD didn't matter to those attendees at the 2025 Spring Consortium for Asphalt Pavement Research and Implementation (CAPRI) meeting who heard about a "Reimagined" BMD framework that has been developed and proposed by the National Asphalt Pavement Association's (NAPA) BMD Implementation Working Group (IWG). This "reimagined" BMD framework was just one of several technical presentations offered to CAPRI members at the April meeting.

The new framework is currently navigating its way through the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), an association representing the state transportation departments, with the potential of becoming officially accepted and adopted sometime in the next 12 +/- months.

Before presenting the Reimagined BMD Framework, let's briefly review a definition of BMD and the current "4 Approach Framework" identified in AASHTO PP 105 (Standard Practice for Balanced Design of Asphalt Mixtures).



Balanced Mix Design is an innovative approach that balances durability with resistance to permanent deformation in asphalt mixtures. Unlike traditional methods that primarily focus on volumetric properties, BMD places significant emphasis on mechanical testing to ensure the mixture can withstand the stresses it will encounter in service. The goal is to create asphalt mixtures that are durable; resistant to all forms of distress that can reduce an asphalt pavement's life; and capable of performing well under varying traffic and environmental conditions.

- **Approach A: Volumetric Design with BMD** **Verification** requires full compliance with the existing volumetric requirements and additional performance requirements and, thus, is the most-conservative approach and has the lowest-innovation potential.
- **Approach B: Volumetric Design with BMD Optimization** requires full compliance with the existing volumetric requirements at the preliminary Optimum Binder Content (OBC) but allows moderate changes in asphalt binder content for performance optimization based on mixture performance test results. Although Approach B is slightly more flexible than Approach A, it is still considered a conservative approach with limited innovation potential.
- **Approach C: BMD-Modified Volumetric Design** allows some of the volumetric requirements to be relaxed or eliminated if the performance criteria are satisfied. The mix design modifications that can be used in performance optimization are not limited to changes in asphalt binder content. Therefore, it is less conservative than Approach A and Approach B and provides a medium degree of innovation potential.

- **Approach D: BMD Design Only** has no requirement on volumetric properties and relies solely on mixture performance test results for mix design optimization and, thus, is considered the least-conservative approach with the highest degree of innovation potential.

As Ohio (and other states) consider adopting BMD, most mix designers and Quality Control managers generally found DOTs typically starting conservatively with Approach A, which retained all volumetric mix design requirements with the addition of select performance testing. Producer/contractors, on the other hand, typically express interest in Approach C or D (preferred), which reduced or eliminated many volumetric requirements in favor of performance testing and contractor innovation. Regardless of the chosen BMD Approach, most would agree they are still learning, as it is still very early in the potential transition to BMD.

Now, regarding the BMD IWG CAPRI presentation, unless you have an interest in research or happen to be involved with the research community, you may not realize that various groups – including NAPA, NCAT (National Center for Asphalt Technology), CAPRI, NCHRP (National Cooperative Highway Research Program) and others are all currently doing research on BMD as well as various other topics related to the flexible pavements industry.

As research takes place, standards, procedures, equipment, methods, etc., change as data becomes available and recommendations, guidelines and requirements are approved, published and presented. In addition, for BMD, NAPA's IWG is responsible for advocating and facilitating the implementation of BMD on a national level. Likewise, the IWG can also develop and recommend changes or revisions to early BMD guidance. Consequently, we have the proposed “Reimagined” BMD framework.

Over the last several years, as owner/agencies have begun their journey into BMD methodologies, the IWG has noticed that many owners seem to focus on Approach A, which simply adds performance testing to existing volumetric requirements. Although currently identified in the original BMD framework, this approach is more appropriately described as Superpave Level 3 or Volumetric Plus mix design. Relying upon Approach A may be effective in terms of improving pavement performance, however, it falls short regarding reducing cost (life cycle) and maximizing environmental impact; both additional goals of BMD.

Therefore, a reset was in order, and a Reimagined BMD framework was developed. The reimagined BMD framework is structured into three tiers, each offering varying levels of flexibility and performance optimization in asphalt mixture design. These tiers represent a progression from traditional

design methods towards a more performance-oriented approach. It is believed that the new framework should encourage owners/DOTs to relax volumetric requirements more, or more sooner, than was typically expected with the original 4 Approach Framework. Following is a detailed description of each tier:

Tier 1 - Volumetric Design with Performance Verification:

This introductory tier maintains the traditional volumetric design methods to establish initial mixture proportions. Once the volumetric criteria are satisfied, performance verification is conducted through mechanical testing. The primary goal is to ensure that the mixture meets baseline performance requirements such as resistance to cracking and deformation while adhering to established volumetric specifications.

Tier 2 - Volumetric Design with BMD Optimization:

In Tier 2, the design process incorporates BMD criteria from the beginning, allowing mechanical testing results to guide mixture adjustments. This iterative process seeks to balance volumetric properties with BMD performance criteria. The emphasis here is on achieving a more refined mixture design that optimizes performance characteristics while still considering traditional volumetric parameters.

Tier 3 - Performance-Driven Design:

The most advanced tier, Tier 3, focuses almost entirely on performance optimization. Volumetric criteria play a minimal role, with the primary emphasis placed on using mechanical testing to ensure that the mixture meets desired performance characteristics, such as durability and resilience under specific service conditions. This tier allows for maximum flexibility in material selection and mixture adjustments, encouraging the use of innovative and sustainable materials.

These tiers reflect a strategic progression from traditional practices to a highly performance-driven approach, supporting the development of superior asphalt pavements that meet specific performance challenges while considering economic and environmental factors.

It remains to be seen exactly how Ohio will implement BMD, as it is still a relatively new concept that is still in the development stage. Additional changes are likely to occur before ODOT or any agency can fully, effectively and efficiently implement BMD.

Flexible Pavements of Ohio will continue to update readers in future issues of *Ohio Asphalt*, on the evolving concept of BMD for Ohio.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO CHOOSE WISELY

PART 2

(Editor's note: This is the second of a series of articles on choosing the correct asphalt mix selection for your project. Part 1 appeared in the Fall 2025 issue of *Ohio Asphalt*.)



Before we begin reviewing asphalt mix selection for routes/projects with heavy traffic, it's always good to acknowledge those engineers, sometimes considered veterans in our industry, that typically possess the knowledge, skills, abilities and experience to specify asphalt on a variety of projects and achieve the performance and durability the owner or customer expects. In other words, for those of you happy and satisfied with the performance of the asphalt mixes you have been specifying – continue doing what you have been doing.

On the other hand, if you are less experienced or simply looking for additional information to help select asphalt mixes that improve upon past performance or potentially optimize performance, then continue reading for some asphalt mix selection guidelines that may assist you on future projects.

Although the selection of asphalt mix for projects characterized as having heavy or high-volume traffic is critically important in minimizing risk and ensuring performance, it is also relatively easy. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) definition of a heavy traffic route or project is one that has average daily truck traffic (ADTT) of greater than 1,500 trucks in the opening day traffic. In addition, some roadways – such as industrial parkways, commercial/retail corridors or unique locations (e.g. loading docks, trucking terminals, facilities with heavy slow-moving trucks) may be candidates for heavy traffic mixes even though they don't meet the ODOT 1,500 truck definition. This is where experience, combined with prudent judgement, is very important when selecting asphalt mixes that will perform as expected.

It's also important to note that asphalt mixes designed for heavy traffic are typically coarse-graded mixes requiring highly crushed aggregates, high-quality polymer binders and diligent construction practices to achieve high in-place density to assure optimum performance. Consequently, these mixes can be a bit more expensive and challenging to place, especially on projects with driveways, side roads, varying width, handwork, etc. Proper lift thicknesses and proper application are critical for successful and economical use of asphalt designed for heavy traffic.



I-75 is an example of the use of heavy traffic asphalt mix.

Once you determine that your pavement/project qualifies for heavy traffic asphalt, your choices are generally limited to the following asphalt mix specifications:

Base Asphalt

Item 302 – Asphalt Concrete Base

Ohio's big rock base designed to be placed in thick(er) lifts for strength and economy.

Intermediate Course Asphalt

Item 442 – Asphalt Concrete Intermediate Course
ODOT's Superpave intermediate mix can be specified as 9.5mm, 12.5mm or 19mm NMAS (Nominal Maximum Aggregate Size) mix, largely depending upon lift thickness limitations and traffic demand.

Surface Course Asphalt

Item 442 – Asphalt Concrete Surface Course
ODOT's Superpave surface mix can be specified as a 9.5mm or 12.5mm NMAS mix. Note that 12.5mm is most common for ODOT interstates and many other multi-lane divided highways; 9.5mm mix is more common on urban/suburban arterials or other unique applications. Typical binder for a Superpave surface is PG 70-22M, however, increasing the binder grade to PG 76-22M or PG 88-22M is viable to improve performance in high(er)-stress locations.

Alternate Surface Course

Item 443 – Stone Matrix Asphalt Concrete (SMA)
A premium gap-graded mix using high-quality aggregate and polymer binders typically used for high-stress applications with very high volume and/or heavy trucks. SMA mixes, though uncommon, have been used in Ohio.

Preservation or Alternate Surface Course

Item 424 – Fine Graded Polymer Asphalt Concrete, Type B
A premium high-quality fine(er) graded mix typically designed for preservation or as a surface course on a two-lane highway or local arterial route.

While these mentioned mixes are intended to point you in the right direction for use on heavy traffic projects, ODOT's Pavement Design Manual (PDM) must also be reviewed and referenced for additional considerations and specifications pertaining to proper application, lift thickness and design and mix details.



ODOT'S PDM CAN BE FOUND AT THIS QR CODE:

See Section 400 for Flexible Pavement Design.

For any questions about the proper use of heavy traffic asphalt, contact Flexible Pavements of Ohio for assistance. And always remember that success using asphalt concrete depends upon your ability to choose wisely ...

Future issues of *Ohio Asphalt* will feature additional mix selection guidance on medium and light traffic asphalt.

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CHLORINATED SOLVENT UPDATE:

ATTENTION LABORATORY PERSONNEL, QC MANAGERS, TECHNICIANS

Asphalt laboratory personnel, quality control (QC) managers and technicians are likely aware of the ongoing federal government regulation changes regarding chlorinated solvents in mix design laboratories. Administration changes in Washington, D.C., along with the unknown and uncertainties associated with new chemical availability and effectiveness, will likely create challenges for many producer laboratories to adjust and comply.

Due to the Montreal Protocols and the U.S. Clean Air Act, chlorinated solvents like 1,1,1-trichloroethane and trichloroethylene are being phased out for environmental, health and safety reasons. This has led to the exploration of alternative solvents that are less harmful to the environment and human health.

Research has been ongoing in testing the effectiveness of alternative chemicals, such as normal propyl bromide (nPB) solvents as a replacement for traditional chlorinated solvents. Alternatives such as nPB aim to provide similar extraction efficiencies while reducing environmental and health impacts. But questions remain regarding effects the new solvents could have upon the rheological properties of the asphalt binder. In addition, concerns exist about compatibility with polymer-modified asphalts and variations in solvent purity.



This past fall, The Consortium for Asphalt Pavement Research and Implementation (CAPRI) attempted to update and educate asphalt laboratory personnel and practitioners about the ongoing changes in the use of chlorinated solvents and potential alternative chemicals. CAPRI held three webinars (Chats) that addressed the following topics:

- Solvent Regulations
- Solvents: State of the Practice
- Solvent: Solvent Future

If your job involves the use of chlorinated solvents and you would like a state of practice update, consider viewing these webinars/chats. The videos can be accessed through the following QR code:



(Editor's note: This QR code will also provide access to additional CAPRI webinars on a variety of topics, including Cold Weather Paving, Warm Mix Asphalt, Balanced Mix Design and Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).)

OA

TRUCKERS RELEASE 2025 HIGHWAY REPORT CARD

Overdrive magazine, known as "the voice of the American Trucker," is a publication written for trucking owner-operators and drivers for small commercial truck fleets. The magazine recently released the "Truckers' Highway Report Card," which ranked each state based on survey responses from over-the-road truck drivers on the condition and maintenance of roadways and related infrastructure such as availability of truck parking.

Although the sample size is fairly small, it reflected the opinion of truck drivers who routinely utilize the nation's transportation system. Overall, Ohio's roadway network was ranked the third best in the nation. Ohio also fared well in the best interstate corridors in the nation category, with Interstate 80 ranked as the fourth best. Additionally, Ohio's I-70 and I-75

corridors finished in a three-way tie with I-20 in Texas as the 10th-best route. With more than 98% of Ohio's road surfaces comprised of asphalt, the results of this survey confirm the high performance of asphalt pavements in the state.

Scan the QR below to access the full report.



SCAN HERE

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NAPA ANNOUNCES 2026-2028 STATE ADVISORS



The National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA) announced the election of State Advisors who will serve on the national Advisory Council for the 2026–2028 term. These leaders provide industry experience and regional insight to shape the policy, direction and focus of the national asphalt pavement industry. Each State Advisor was elected by NAPA Producer members and will serve a three-year term effective Jan. 1, 2026. The latest election resulted in 21 new State Advisors from across the country and five in the North

Central Region, which includes Ohio. Their role assures state-level perspectives are heard at the national level, as they serve on the council with their respective state asphalt association leaders.



CHAD REEL

Chad Reel was elected Ohio's new NAPA State Director. Reel currently serves as Vice

President, General Manager of the Northeast Division for The Shelly Company and is a member of Flexible Pavements of Ohio's (FPO) Board of Directors. He has been with The Shelly Company since 2007.



BRENT GERKEN

Reel is replacing Brent Gerken, who has served as Ohio's NAPA State Director since 2010. The Gerken Companies President announced in 2025 he would not seek election to another term. Gerken has been a member of FPO's Board of Directors since 1992.

Congratulations Chad on your election and thank you Brent for your many years of service representing Ohio's asphalt industry.

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Mark Your Calendars



NAPA Annual Meeting
January 26-29
Fairmont Scottsdale Princess
7575 East Princess Drive
Scottsdale, AZ 85255

The National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA) Annual Meeting provides the latest tools and insights to help you reach your goals in the asphalt pavement industry. General sessions, workshops, committee meetings and invaluable industry networking make NAPA's Annual Meeting where the industry gathers to set its future.

Visit the NAPA website at www.asphaltpavement.org for up-to-date conference information.



Ohio Asphalt Paving Conference
February 4
The Ohio State University
The Fawcett Center
2400 Olentangy River Road
Columbus, OH 43210

The Ohio Asphalt Paving Conference is a collaborative effort of state and local government, academia and the asphalt industry to present practical, usable technologies and strategies for the design and construction of asphalt pavements.



Ohio Asphalt EXPO
March 17-18
Columbus/Polaris Hilton Hotel
8700 Lyra Drive
Columbus, OH 43240

The Asphalt EXPO is Ohio's premier asphalt pavement event with multiple concurrent educational sessions and an indoor and outdoor trade show and exhibition. If you construct, inspect, manage or maintain local or private transportation infrastructure, the Ohio Asphalt EXPO has the information you need to ensure a successful, long-lasting asphalt pavement.



Constructing Resilient & Sustainable Transportation Infrastructure for Ohio's Future: A Workshop
June 2-3
Columbus/Polaris Hilton Hotel
8700 Lyra Drive
Columbus, OH 43240

Sponsored by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Ohio University, this workshop will create a path to guide and influence pertinent ODOT policy by integrating resilience and sustainability into all project phases and leveraging new technologies and industry innovations.



NAPA 2026 Midyear Meeting
July 14-17, 2026
TBA
Columbus, OH

The National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA) Midyear Meeting consists of committee meetings and educational sessions focused on advancing the asphalt pavement industry.

Visit FPO's website at www.flexiblepavements.org for more information regarding these events.





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Columbus Equipment Company.....	IFC	The McLean Company.....	7	SealMaster	5
JASA Asphalt Materials/Russell Standard Corp.	3	The McLean Company.....	BC	Shelly & Sands Inc.	3



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