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Did you get cracked up this winter? Time to start your pavement preservation program

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Spring has arrived and now is the perfect time to take a walk and assess the damage the winter has done to your parking lot or roadway. You may find pot holes, sunken catch basins, or large amounts of cracking; which are all examples of a long winter. This is the time to start your pavement preservation program. Not to sound $\hat{A}^{1\frac{1}{2}}$ empty but the fall and the winter will be back before we know it.

You need to repair the pavement failures and seal shut any open cracks. One of the most important preventative maintenance steps is to seal the crack shut with a flexible joint. The reason is to prevent water from entering the sub-base of your pavement by way of the cracks. Water entering the sub-base will lead to base and pavement failure. Here is a list of many commonly asked questions and answers about the importance and difference in cracks and cracksealing.

Why should I crack fill my lot?

Water penetrating into the sub base of a parking lot is a major cause of pavement failure. By sealing the cracks you are preventing water penetration into the sub base by way of the cracks.

What is hot pour crack filler?

Hot pour crack filler is a flexible rubber like product that is used to repair cracks in asphalt pavement. It starts out as a solid rubber block which is melted down in a double jacketed meltor. Once the crack filler is melted down into a liquid it is installed into the crack creating a waterproof, flexible expansion joint in the crack.

Are all hot pour crack fillers the same?

No. There are many types of crack fillers. Some become softer in hot weather but stay firmer in cold weather. Some are firmer so they do not track in high temperatures but do not need to be as flexible in cold temperatures because the area climate is not that extreme. Find out from your installer what type of crack filler you are getting.

Does hot applied crack filler come in any color other than black?

Many people do not like the way black crack filler stands out on a gray oxidized parking lot. It now comes in gray along with other colors for your Tennis Courts like green, red, and blue as well.

What is the difference between hot pour and cold pour crack filler?

Hot pour crack fillers are heated and are applied as a hot liquid. When it cools down it becomes a pliable, rubber like consistency. It will be flexible enough to expand and contract with the crack as it opens and closes with the temperature changes. Cold applied crack filler is usually a water or asphalt based product. It is applied in a liquid form and dries into a solid. Cold pour crack fillers look great but tend to be less flexible. In areas of the country where the temperatures get cold this type of crack filler tends to fail.

Why does hot pour crack filler always seem soft?

Hot pour crack filler is designed to always remain flexible so it will expand and contract as the crack it is in does. When you press it with your finger it's supposed to flex. When you park on it on a hot summer day your tire may actually leave an imprint.

How long before you can drive on hot pour crack filler?

Hot pour crack filler can be driven on almost immediately, depending on the temperatures. The cooler it is outside the faster it cools down and hardens up so you can drive on it.

Why does hot pour crack filler sometimes pull up?

The wrong type of crack filler may have been applied for the situation of your parking lot. The crack may not have been properly cleaned prior to the installation. The crack filler is only as good as the asphalt it is bonding to. The asphalt may have been damaged by an oil spill or may just be too weak to hold the crack filler down on a hot summer day.

Can ants actually get through the rubberized crack filler?

Unfortunately yes, ants can burrow their way through crack sealant to get out of their nest.

Can I fix an alligatored area with crack filler?

To repair areas that are alligatored (areas that are so cracked they look like an alligator's back, a road map or a spider web) correctly, they should be cut out and removed, the base repaired and then repaved. This process is expensive. If the budget does not allow, we can crack fill an alligatored area getting the major cracks and helping to hold it together until you can properly repair the area.

What does applying black beauty to the cracks do?

Applying black beauty does nothing structurally to the crack filler. Its job is to create a barrier between the crack filler and a vehicle's tires.

How should the cracks be prepared prior to the crack sealant being installed?

1. Grass & weeds should be removed from the cracks. If there is a lot of growth in the cracks; it should be killed first so no live roots will be left behind. This could lead to grass growing up through your new crack filler. Even if the grass is burned its roots need to be taken out of the cracks.
2. Cleaning of the sidewalks of the cracks should be done using a minimum of 125 CFM 90 PSI air pressure. Leaf blowers only get the tops of the cracks and not the sidewalks.

How should hot applied crack sealant be applied?

1. Using a pressure applicator.
2. Routing the cracks and using a gravity feed pouring pot.
3. Using squeegees tend not to fill the cracks completely.

How are you charged for cracksealing?

NESCO prefers to tell you how many linear feet of cracks there are and a lump sum price to seal all of the cracks. Others will charge you by the linear foot, gallons of crack filler or pallets of crack filler. This leaves the customer wide open to what the actual cost will be to finish the job.

Are some cracks too wide for hot applied crack sealants?

The standard hot applied crack fillers effectiveness is shakey at around 2 ½ inches, but there now

are mastics such as Poly Patch which is designed for very wide cracks.

What do you do if there

is a wide crack between

concrete and asphalt?

Mastics such as Poly Patch work excellent in these situations.

Don't wait until it's too late to slow down the deterioration of your parking lot. If NESCO can be of any help please send us an email at info@newenglandsealcoating.com or give us a call toll free at 1-800-225-4015. We look forward to hearing from you, and helping you this spring, summer and fall with all of your pavement maintenance needs.

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