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Busting the myth that PICPs do not work in cold climates

July 21, 2010 - Green Buildings

Although winter seems a long way off, especially considering the unprecedented heat so far this summer, it is a frequent topic among those seeking information from Pavers by Ideal about its Eco-Stone and Aqua-Brick permeable pavers. Permeable Interlocking Concrete Pavement (PICP) is an acknowledged Best Management Practice (BMP) for stormwater management, and yet the myth persists that they do not work in cold climates. Let's take a look at this myth and provide the facts to put it to rest.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then the parking lot at Drake Hill Commons (formerly Lafayette Rd. Office Park) in North Hampton, NH provides the information of a thousand words. Covering 15,000 square feet, the Eco-Stone Permeable Paver parking lot continues to be attractive, structurally sound, and high performing despite enduring over 10 years of harsh New England winters since its installation by The Griffen Group in 1999. It has withstood countless freeze-thaw cycles, regular snow plowing and sanding, and, with just routine maintenance by conventional street sweepers, it continues to drain water effectively. On a recent trip to the area, we stopped by to take a look and perform the quick and telling "water bottle test." We poured the contents of a couple of 20 ounce water bottles on the surface, and the water immediately drained down through the pavement. Now that we have addressed one myth, let's look at an often over looked benefit of permeable pavers, one that improves safety as well as lowers maintenance expenses. During the winter, snow and ice thaw during the day forming puddles that freeze as temperatures drop later in the day and evening. For safety, sanding becomes necessary. In the case of permeable pavers such as Eco-Stone and Aqua-Bric, the melt-off drains into the openings down through the pavement. Minimal sand is required to provide a slip-free surface, and whatever sand remains when Spring arrives can be easily cleaned from the joints and openings using conventional street sweeping equipment.

Drake Hill Commons is one of the many projects that demonstrate our permeable pavers are a practical solution for owners and developers to meet to the increasingly stringent stormwater regulations being implemented by federal, state, and local governments.

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