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Hot Mix Asphalt - Overview by Ben Bradshaw

Article published on April 3rd 2012 | Business

Hot Mix Asphalt or HMA is a broad term indicating different combination forms of asphaltÂ (used as aÂ binder) and mineralÂ aggregateÂ created at elevated temperaturesÂ in an asphalt plant. HMA is one method of blending asphalt and aggregate; the other types including warm mix asphalt concrete, cold mix asphalt concrete, cut-back asphalt concrete, mastic asphalt concrete, natural asphalt concrete etc.

The process of making HMA involves the reduction of thickness of asphalt binder by heating it and elimination of moisture from the aggregate by dehydrating it. Mixing of the two will be done at high temperature, usually between 300-350ÂºF. This mix should be laid down in layers and compressed while the asphalt is still adequately hot.

Hot Mix Asphalt as a Versatile Paving Material

HMC is usually used for road repairs and complete road replacements and on highly traffickedÂ pavementsÂ such as majorÂ highways,Â streets, racetracks, airdromes and other industrial applications. Thanks to its excellent properties and long life, hot mix asphalt is very popular in many countries across the globe.

HMA can be effectively superimposed on damaged or aging pavements requiring supplementary structure and improved surfaces. This is a popular corrective treatment of choice for asphalt and concrete pavements. The only prerequisite is that HMA overlays should be put on properly arranged base structures without any indications of moisture damage. Quick repairing of roads can be perfectly achieved by HMA. Potholes and cracks can be effectively evened out by injecting hot mix asphalt. A more permanent solution can be achieved by replacing the complete sections of the damaged road.

This particular type of asphalt and aggregate combination is excellent in providing completely sealed surfaces that are resistant to dampness, rutting and cracking and hence serves as a great surface for roads. Hot mix asphalt also enhances the appearance of the surface and can certainly add the much needed curb appeal to your driveway. This strong and durable surfacing material can survive freezing and thawing.

Experiences show that appropriately designed and constructed HMA pavements tend to last for 50 years or more. OccasionalÂ resurfacing may be required to keep them in good condition. Another advantage of hot mix asphalt is that it can be recycled and hence really cost effective. Both the aggregates and asphaltÂ binderÂ can be reused in a new HMA mix.

Another benefit of using hot mix asphalt is that it provides smooth and quiet riding surfaces that are excellently skid resistant. Ease of maintenance is another plus point.

Hot mix asphalt offers a quick, proficient and economical construction process with unmatchedÂ flexibility.

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Article Keywords:
Hot mix asphalt,Road re-instatement,Driveway repairs melbourne

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