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BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT ASPHALT DRIVEWAYS

Once your new asphalt driveway is in place, it will require care and maintenance, both when it's new, and over its lifetime. Like the rest of the improvements on your property, the better care you give to your asphalt driveway, the longer it will last. Asphalt contains a petroleum liquid that needs time to harden and cure. It will often take **24 months or longer** to completely cure – until then, it will remain pliable and soft. Even when cured, asphalt can sometimes soften in extremely hot weather and harden as temperatures fall. To temporarily harden hot asphalt, you can water it down with a garden hose. If soap suds should appear, do not be alarmed. This is caused by a reaction between the diesel fuel found in asphalt and the chlorine found in some city water.

Your driveway may look smoother in some areas than in others because of the makeup of the asphalt. The material is composed of various sizes of stone, sand, liquid petroleum, and other ingredients which cause a varied texture of the surface. Also, asphalt areas that have been raked and spread with hand tools (usually in confined areas) may appear different from those spread by machine. This does not, however, compromise the integrity of your driveway. Although every effort is made to avoid puddles on your driveway, you should be aware that some shallow ones are inevitable due to the natural slope and drainage of your land.

Protecting your driveway from water seepage is one of the most important factors of maintaining a paved driveway. It not only causes deterioration of the asphalt, but can result in ridges and heaves due to frost and freezing. The proper care and treatment of you driveway will extend its life and create an attractive addition to your property for many years to come.

CARE OF YOUR NEWLY PAVED DRIVEWAY: "DO's & DON'Ts"

DO's

- 1) **Do** keep vehicles off the surface for at least 5 days, longer in hot weather.
- 2) **Do** keep heavy trucks off (i.e. concrete, oil, landscaping, etc.).
- 3) **Do** keep sharp objects off (chair legs, bicycle/motorcycle kick stands, ladders, high heels, etc.)
- 4) **Do** support pavement edges with a build-up of topsoil, gravel or reclaim.
- 5) **Do** avoid leaks and spills of fluids such as gasoline, oil, anti-freeze, power steering, and transmission. These fluids can dissolve the asphalt which will deteriorate your driveway. Clean up any spills using absorbent materials to minimize damage.
- 6) **Do** use crack filler on any fine cracks that may develop (All driveways will eventually crack due to our Maine weather).
- 7) **Do** use plywood under jack stands & car ramps to distribute the weight.
- 8) **Do** use plywood under the tires & tongue jacks of campers and other stored vehicles.

DON'Ts

- 1) **Don't** park in the same spot every time. Change its position each time you park to prevent displacement.
- 2) **Don't** pull out or in quickly or drive fast.
- 3) **Don't** turn steering wheel while vehicle is not moving. Start the car moving and gradually turn wheels while the car is in motion.
- 4) **Don't** drive on the edges of the pavement, since they will crack and crumble over time.
- 5) **Don't** seal coat your driveway sooner than 24 months after paving.
- 6) **Don't** let weeds & grass grow through cracks – Vegetation, such as weeds and grass are able to push through asphalt. In most cases you can use a spot killer to remedy the situation.