

Things to think about

Safety

“Working safely may get old, but so do those who practice it.”

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Cold Weather Paving

It's that time of year again. The cooler weather is on its way. And although it is not ideal for placing and compacting Hot Mix, it can be successful done.

What you have to recognize is that paving practices that are successful in the warm weather months may not produce the same quality results in the cooler months. Successful contractors know how to adapt their operations to changing weather conditions to ensure quality placement. Here are some tips to consider when paving in cooler weather...

- **Design:**

- Are you able to utilize warm mix technology?
- When using specialty mixes (SMA, TOM, Superpave); paving below 70°F regularly leads to problems so plan early and be proactive.
- What is the lift thickness? The thinner the layer of asphalt, the faster heat will dissipate. This means that in cold weather, crews have a smaller window for success.

- **Hauling:**

- Temperature is key, haul distances can affect the mix temperature as it reaches the job site.
- Make sure the trucks are properly tarped. Use a waterproof tarp with no holes that overlaps the edge of the truck.

- **Placement:**

- Thermal Imaging System: allows for paving as low as 32°F with Engineers approval.
- Maintaining temperature is critical: MTV, mat thicknesses impact maintaining temp and aid in limiting cold spots.
- Take time to develop and review a cold weather-paving plan with your crew.

The key in cold weather paving is that the Time Available for Compaction (TAC) is dramatically reduced. So, in planning for your next project, consider all the factors that will contribute to cooling of the mix.

