

MEMBER BEST PRACTICES



ONE WAY TO ELEVATE: DON'T LET COMPLACENCY SNEAK UP

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TXAPA's 46th Annual Meeting just concluded, and the theme couldn't have been more appropriate: **ELEVATE!**

There are so many ways that each of us, working in various parts of the asphalt industry, can **ELEVATE** the way we do business to deliver high-quality, durable asphalt pavements.

During my 39-year career working with asphalt pavements, I've seen a wide range of quality in projects. Some projects have run efficiently from material production through material placement, resulting in a smooth riding surface. Other projects encountered challenges at various points during the project and were not able to achieve the same level of quality. When I think about what separated these projects, there were many contributing factors, but one really stands out: **complacency**.

What is complacency? The Cambridge Dictionary defines complacency as "a feeling of calm satisfaction with your own abilities or situation that prevents you from trying harder." Other definitions could include contentment, carelessness, slackness, being lax, laziness, being self-content, or just being comfortable and bored.

Placing hot mix is a seemingly repetitive process. However, there are many variables that can change the quality of the final product. Complacency can creep in at any time, starting with material production, testing of the material, or production of the hot mix. Similarly, there is a potential to compromise quality during material loading, delivery to the project, and transfer of material to the shuttle buggy if procedures are not carefully monitored. And of course, there is always the challenge of getting a uniform product through the paver and all the intricacies involved in rolling the material to produce a dense, uniform, and smooth product.

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PAGE 2

Along the way, it becomes easy to assume that because we delivered a quality product yesterday, we will automatically achieve that same level of quality today. When we become complacent in this manner, attention to detail can fade, resulting in sloppy work, lost productivity, lost efficiency, and even accidents.

How can complacency be avoided? Complacency can only occur after we have achieved success. It's important to celebrate that success every chance we get, no matter how small. But what's more important is to **ELEVATE** ourselves beyond this success to ensure it continues. Challenge the entire team to step it up, not rest on past laurels, and work hard so more success can be achieved. Focus on those small details and remain vigilant. Remind everyone what it feels like to have a great final product. The morning tailgate safety meeting is a great time to both celebrate and **ELEVATE** the team by making complacency a regular topic.

As we go about our daily business of producing a great asphalt pavement product, let's not become complacent, no matter how good things may be going. Complacency allows us to aim too low for what is expected and can prevent us from reaching our goal of providing a smooth, high-quality, and long-lasting asphalt pavement.

ABOUT MEMBER BEST PRACTICES

Member Best Practices are contributed monthly by CEI members of the Texas Asphalt Pavement Association, the voice for the asphalt pavement industry in Texas. To see other best practices, visit texasasphalt.org/best-practices

SHARPEN YOUR COMPETITIVE EDGE

TXAPA is a full-service association committed to improving and growing the asphalt industry by providing its membership of asphalt pavers, producers, contractors, liquid asphalt suppliers, and other interested firms with the services and information necessary to maintain a competitive edge.



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