

## Maintenance

# Parking lot care benefits from early planning

As we sit smack-dab in the middle of another paving season, many customers ponder – sometimes with frustration and disdain – why parking lot maintenance service providers can't perform projects within a 15- to 20-day timeframe from the signed contract. Let me help explain and assist in simplifying the process.

Anyone who is responsible for maintaining a facility, of any size, knows there are specific responsibilities that have to be taken care of at certain times of the year. Parking lot season typically is April to November, at the very latest, depending on Mother Nature's temperament.



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It is crucial to begin planning for a successful parking lot upgrade,

trip-hazard repair, seal coat or a complete over haul, by starting the process in the winter months. Meeting with your estimator a few months before the season begins gives you an opportunity to culminate a project that is the most advantageous for everyone involved.

Some of the factors to take into consideration that affect scheduling, which typically are behind the scene in the asphalt and concrete industry, are as follows:



The removal and replacement of a concrete drain pan and an asphalt patch – shown here at a Century Link in Colorado Spring – are extremely common maintenance tasks in Colorado due to the climate.

- Carryover from last year's workload tops the list. Projects that couldn't be completed due to weather will be scheduled for the next season and take precedence over new projects.

- There is a shortage in the construction labor pool, which is a direct result of the housing market plummeting in 2008. Since an innumerable number of folks lost their jobs in the industry, a large quantity of them found jobs in other arenas, which left the construction industry tapped. In addition, very few seasoned employees were left to teach the invaluable

lessons and industry knowledge that needs to be taught to the greenhorns.

- There are only so many weekends in the season, and copious companies rely on their work being performed on a specific weekend to accommodate their schedule.

- If there are many decision makers – board members, owners, regional directors, etc. – in the process, there will be many questions for the estimator. If those questions are fielded in the winter months, sufficient time and consideration will be given and a quick turnaround is ensured. If the questions are presented in the heat

of the season, it is much more likely that the turnaround timeframe for answers will span two to four weeks due to the volume of requested proposals.

So, the moral of the story goes back to the old adage: The early bird really does get the worm. Plan your parking lot needs way before they become emergencies; request proposals from your estimators early in the new year; and once the decision to go with a specific company has been made, turn in the signed proposal to ensure your project gets on the schedule.▲



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