



## ASPHALT PAVEMENTS - A STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE IN SMOOTHNESS

### Fast Facts

*Motorists care about smooth pavements.*

A national survey of motorists funded by the Federal Highway Administration showed that a smooth ride is the top priority of the traveling public.

*Smooth pavements save fuel.*

Results from a pavement test track in Nevada showed that trucks could save 4.5 percent of their fuel cost by running on a smoother surface.

*Smooth pavements save vehicle operating costs.*

Results from the same Nevada test track showed a significant reduction of frame, suspension, and engine component problems when the pavement smoothness was improved.

According to figures developed by The Road Information Program (TRIP) from data supplied by the U.S. Department of Transportation, driving on too-rough roads costs our nation's motorists \$23 billion a year -- or \$126 per year per motorist -- in extra vehicle operating costs.

*Smooth pavements last longer.*

Smoothness means that truck tires don't bounce on the pavement and deliver the kind of impact loading they would on a rougher pavement.

Some experts estimate that increasing pavement smoothness by 25 percent results in a 9 percent to 10 percent increase in the life of pavements. With asphalt pavements, improvements in smoothness can be achieved at little to no additional cost.

*Asphalt pavements are smoother.*

While some public agencies have the same requirements for the smoothness of Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) and concrete pavements, many actually have stricter requirements for asphalt. Why are asphalt roads held to a higher standard? Because they can be.

In a 1999 report to Congress, the General Accounting Office (GAO) noted that "Concrete roads may produce rougher (smoothness) readings than asphalt roads, even if the concrete road is of very high quality. Features such as joints between sections can contribute to the roughness of concrete highways."