

Snapshots from the Sea-to-Sky . . .

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Highway pavement no simple thing

It's easy to take the ribbons of pavement we drive on for granted. However, the manufacture and installation of hot mix asphalt is a complex undertaking. Careful control of the binding material, size and quality of the aggregate along with rigorous temperature control when being mixed and placed are among the many issues of pavement quality management. Pavement compaction is an important factor in pavement performance and smoothness. Highway paving consists of two layers (also called 'lifts') of asphalt, a base layer and a top lift. The top layer of pavement on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project uses a system referred to as Superpave; Superior Performing Asphalt Pavements. This system was developed to give highway engineers and contractors the ability to design asphalt pavements that will perform better under extremes of temperature and heavy traffic loads, and make use of existing local aggregates.

P.S. *The first recorded use of asphalt as a road-building material is found in Babylon in 625 B.C. Asphalt is a heavy, dark brown to black mineral substance, one of several mixtures of hydrocarbons called bitumen, used as a binder to glue the aggregates together.*



Crews applying the second layer of pavement. Note the worker with the probe, checking temperature and depth. Superpave must be applied at 145°C. Using the harder rock from the Rayonier Quarry in Squamish will help prevent pavement wear. The use of Superpave will result in a approximate noise reduction of 2 decibels.

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project *Improving safety, reliability and capacity*

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