

KENT COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

SEALCOAT PROGRAM

Sealcoating of our County roads has been a very productive improvement program for Kent County Road Commission for a number of years. On average, we place sealcoat on approximately 75 miles of County roads each year to extend the life of the road for area motorists. The process is a two-step application of asphalt emulsion and stone. The emulsion serves two functions; one to fill cracks in the pavement, and second to bond the stone to the existing surface. The stone provides a renewed driving surface that increases tire traction and improves stopping distance for added safety.

The sealcoat process allows for quick application and driver access to the roadway. Once the stone is applied and rolled into the emulsion, curing or setting of the asphalt binder begins to take place immediately. Cold and wet weather hampers the curing of the asphalt emulsion and can cause longer delays in traffic or possible failures in the final product.

Kent County Road Commission places “loose stone” signs to inform motorists, pedestrians, and bikers that a sealcoat has been placed. Adequate stone needs to be placed to insure coverage of the asphalt emulsion to prevent tracking of the emulsion, and to provide a uniform driving surface. Kent County Road Commission will sweep the surface of sealcoated roads to pick up excess loose stone, but not until after the stone has completed the bonding with the emulsion. “Loose stone” signs remain in place until the sweeping phase has been completed.

The cost to place a sealcoat surface is approximately \$25,000.00/mile of two-lane road, and the life expectancy is three to five years depending on the conditions of the existing road. By comparison, a one-course overlay of bituminous asphalt pavement 1.5 inches thick is approximately \$75,000.00 with a life expectancy of eight to ten years.

With declining revenues, our goal is to keep as many miles of County roads in good or fair condition as possible. Using the sealcoat process allows us to improve and protect more miles of road for Kent County motorists with the resources we have available.