

Are you considering seal coating your parking lot or driveway this summer?

Runoff from driveways and parking lots can contain concentrations of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). PAHs can pose health risks to humans, be toxic to aquatic life, and degrade aquatic communities. In addition to the environmental risk they pose, it can be much more costly for cities to dispose of the material dredged from stormwater ponds.

If you are considering sealcoating your driveway or parking lot, consider using an asphalt-based sealcoat. The other variety of sealcoat is a coal-tar based sealcoat. A collaborative study completed by the City of Austin, Texas and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) have identified that PAH concentrations can be ten times that of an uncoated parking lot for asphalt-based sealcoats and up to 65 times for coal-tar based sealcoats.

In fact, coal-tar based sealcoating products have been removed from the shelves of two home improvement retailers, Lowe's and Home Depot. Recently, Minnesota legislation has banned the purchase of coal-tar based sealcoat products by state agencies as of July 1, 2010.

Remember, if you are sealcoating your parking lot or driveway this summer, look for an asphalt-based sealcoat. It will help minimize the impact to the environment and reduce costs for cities to dispose of dredged stormwater.