

# 7 Signs of Pavement Wear

Tips on how to diagnose and correct

Learn how to extend  
the life of your  
pavement

What you don't know  
about your pavement may  
be costing you money



**Lower Liability Claims, Save Money  
and Improve Curb Appeal**

# Parking Lot Maintenance Tips: How to Lower Liability Claims, Save Money and Improve Curb Appeal

Your pavement is by far one of the most important investments to consider when it comes to increasing the value of your property, reducing your liability and insurance costs, as well as increasing the aesthetic appeal of your business. Too often, Property Owners, Managers, and Facility Operators neglect their pavement. Overtime, such neglect costs Property Owners thousands of dollars in repair, insurance and instances of liability. Understanding the condition of your pavement is the first step in ensuring that your investments are secured.

## Evaluating the Condition of Your Pavement:

What follows is a list of common areas of pavement conditions to help you diagnose the overall state of your pavement. Also included is a discussion of several maintenance procedures that you can adopt as a proactive approach in managing your pavement. If your pavement matches one or more of the poor conditions described below, you are losing money at an exponential rate. Be sure to repair and replace any areas of your pavement that are in poor, or mediocre condition, as this is the only method you can adopt in protecting the financial security of your property. Property Owners who do not maintain the condition of their pavement can literally watch their resources fall between the pavement cracks.

## Diagnosing your Pavement:



**Raveling:** Overtime, the presence of water on your pavement eventually leads to the separation of aggregate particles from the pavement's surface, as water finds its way into the pavement's substrate.

Preventing raveling requires that all new asphalts are sealcoated after new asphalt has cured. Sealcoating once raveling has occurred will not repair already accrued raveling, but will help in reducing further raveling.



**Polished Aggregate:** In high traffic areas, pavement often becomes smooth, creating dangerous conditions for vehicles, and contributing to situations of liability.

Bonding agents, such as a primer, or regular scheduled applications of a sand slurry sealcoat will improve the safety of property, ensuring the durability and lifetime of your pavement.



**Gas and Oil Stains:** Oil and gas stains might seem benign, but upon further inspection such stains contribute to the breakdown of your pavement.

To maintain your pavement, and prevent damages caused by stains, applying an oil resistant primer to newly laid asphalt is crucial. For uncoated pavements, an oil resistant primer is still going to increase the durability of your pavement.





**Cracks:** Asphalt cracks have many names and causes. Types of cracks include: shrinkage, longitudinal, reflection, alligator, interconnecting, or any cracks parallel and evenly spaced along the surface of your pavement. Causes of cracks vary and are caused by erosion, unstable conditions of the ground, oxidation (which contributes to shrinkage), weakened/weathered joints, and fluctuation in temperature are just a few of the culprits creating cracks in your asphalt.

When it comes to cracks in your pavement, replacing the eroded and existing pavement with a newer properly installed and sealcoated asphalt is your only option. A properly installed asphalt, reinforced by asphalt fabric and a quality sealcoat, will minimize the possibility of cracking in the future.



**Potholes and Bowls:** Everyone knows what a pothole is; they are a menace to vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, are unsightly, and are a liability. Properties with potholes are often regarded by potential customers as run-down facilities. It might seem incomprehensible, but the truth of the matter is that people often associate the quality of a business with the condition of a business's facilities. Fixing and replacing areas where potholes or bowls exist is a must-do for any property owner.

In cases of potholes or bowls, replacing existing pavement with newer properly installed asphalt with a timely crack sealing, and sealcoating, will boost the aesthetics and reputation of your business, while also reducing instances of liability.



**Grade Depressions:** Areas of high traffic (wherein heavier equipment or vehicles are used), or exposure to large amounts of standing water contribute to grade depressions in your pavement. Grade depressions are localized and are indicated by low depressions on the surface of your pavement.

A field inspection is necessary in determining whether drainage installations or asphalt replacement are required for proper maintenance of your pavement. Traffic loads will be greatly considered when it comes to deciding whether or not your pavement requires replacement.



**Corrugation or Rutting:** Too often, installations of asphalt are poorly constructed. One such factor that is often overlooked is the stability of the asphalt layer. When asphalt stability is compromised, your pavement will become wavy and patterns of bumps will occur.

If this is present in your pavement, replacing your asphalt with a properly installed construction and design will be necessary.







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## Field Inspections

If one or several of the conditions above are present in your pavement, a field inspection is your best option for determining what is the best approach to maintaining or replacing your pavement.

Even if your pavement is in excellent condition, a preventative sealcoat will ensure the longevity of your pavement, as sealcoats deter erosion caused by the elements.

If your pavement is in less than excellent condition, the field inspector might recommend that any cracks are cleaned and filled with industrial grade crack filler. Likewise, an application of a sealcoat to prevent further raveled aggregation might also be recommended.

Pavements determined to be in fair condition by a field inspector will usually harbor raveled aggregate, random cracks, local alligator areas, upheaval, potholes, and or depressions. Depending on the situation of pavements in this condition, your field inspector will propose one or more of the following: a full-depth asphalt repair (making sure to address the subgrade), filling cracks, leveling, and or, restoration of all damaged or failing cross-sections, followed by the always recommended sealcoat.

In the worst case scenario, your field inspector will diagnose your pavement as being in poor condition. Such pavements will likely have to be repaved. But, before paving, your field inspector will inspect the area for future preventative measures to ensure that your pavement will not quickly deteriorate into poor condition after replacement. Securing your investment by locating problems in underlying soil, drainage, and issues of heavy loads of traffic will all be taken into consideration.

## Preventative Maintenance of Your Pavement and Securing Your Investment

Property Owners who make use of large, or even small, areas of asphalt know how important it is to maintain and repair their parking lots, loading zones, and any area where asphalt surfaces are required for their businesses. Even if your property has a small flow of traffic, your investment is still not safe. Pavement naturally fails, due to factors like: ultra-violet rays, the hot sun, gas spills, and underlying soil issues. Overtime, your pavement can become brittle and will naturally shift and erode.

Taking a proactive approach to maintaining and resolving any issues of your pavement's condition is the only way to ensure and secure your investment! Scheduling regular maintenance by qualified contractors is the best option in saving your business countless of dollars overtime. After the completion of your scheduled field inspection you will receive an evaluation report diagnosing the condition of your pavement. Included in this document will be recommendations for maintenance techniques to extend the life of your pavement. If you are interested in ways to lower liabilities, extend the life of your parking facilities, and increase curb appeal, please call PLS today schedule your complimentary field inspection.