

# CALIFORNIA ASPHALT INSIDER

The latest news and views from the California Asphalt Pavement Association  
Jan. 30, 2017



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## CALENDAR

(Always on-line [HERE](#))

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L.A. Area Technical Committee Meeting,  
Wednesday, Feb. 1, 9:30 a.m. to noon  
County of Orange, RDMD Conference Room, 1152 Fruit St., Santa Ana  
Contact: Brandon Milar (916) 995-0086  
Click [HERE](#) for details.

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**SAVE THE DATES!**  
CalAPA Spring Asphalt Pavement Conference & Equipment Expo  
April 12-13  
Doubletree Hotel, 222 N.

## Greetings!

This weekly bulletin contains the latest news and information of interest to the asphalt pavement industry in California. Please feel free to distribute this newsletter to others who may be interested in asphalt pavements.

## → Joint Training & Certification program for materials technicians unveiled at kickoff workshop in Sacramento

After more than 20 years of discussions and two years of intense design work, the long-anticipated Joint Caltrans-industry Training & Certification Program for materials technicians kicked off last week with the formal unveiling of the curriculum for asphalt, soils and aggregates modules.

The three-day workshop brought together a dazzling array of noted experts in construction materials to get an overview of how the program is designed and will be deployed, review the instructor and student handbooks, videos and other training materials, and provide feedback.

"I think this is great because we are bringing all of our brains and perspectives from different entities together in one room," said Dr. Shadi Saadeh, a Cal State Long Beach professor of engineering who is the lead administrator of the program through an inter-agency agreement with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The three-day kickoff workshop was held Jan. 25-27 at California State University, Sacramento. Formal training sites in a laboratory setting are being established at Cal State Long Beach and San Jose State University.

"I'm really excited," Saadeh said in a hallway interview during a break in the workshop. "The turnout and the reviews that we're going to get, the atmosphere in there is very exciting. I'm really happy to see this is happening. This is a reality."

Caltrans program manager Al Ochoa, a District 11 Materials Engineer who took over oversight of the program as it was just coming off the drawing board, seemed equally pleased.

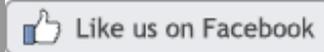


**Dr. Shadi Saadeh (left) of CSULB and Caltrans program manager Al Ochoa display an autographed copy of the first HMA Technician student handbook.**

Vineyard Ave., Ontario  
Contact Sophie You at CalAPA  
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Details soon!

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## GET TECHNICAL

Are you an engineer, designer or technical professional who makes decisions on pavement type selection? The DriveAsphalt website has technical reports and other resources may be just what you're looking for. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

"I just tried to get this to the finish line," he said, understating his contributions and giving credit to others. "We can mold this, and conduct pilot classes. It will be a smooth transition to regular classes."

Those who attended the workshop included many subject-matter experts and others who have influenced state specifications and informed asphalt research over the years, including Dr. Peter Sabaaly and Dr. Adam Hand with the University of Nevada-Reno Western Regional Superpave Center, and Tim Greutert, Chief of the Caltrans Office of Roadway Materials Testing. The polished Greutert took over for the cantankerous Joe Peterson, who did the initial work setting up the JT&CP framework before he retired last year.

More than 20 other states have jointly run training and certification programs for materials technicians, which hold government and industry technicians to the same standards. The programs have a demonstrated track record of improving tester competence and reducing test variability, which has led to a reduction in construction claims and other conflicts.

The creation of a joint industry-agency program was prominently featured in a 2014 letter to the governor's transportation secretary, Brian Kelly, signed by eight construction trade associations, including CalAPA. An oversight board for the program includes Caltrans, the Federal Highway Administration, academia and industry, including CalAPA.

The first joint classes, covering concrete, will be announced soon and will utilize the well-established curriculum developed by the American Concrete Institute. Introductory and advanced Hot Mix Asphalt technician classes, as well as classes in soils and aggregates, will follow shortly thereafter.

To make attending classes as easy as possible, training sites will be established on the campus of Cal State Long Beach to cover the southern half of the state, and at San Jose State University for Northern California.

The diversity of the attendees at the kickoff workshop reflected the diversity of those who have long advocated for a robust training and certification program for materials technicians, and holding agency and industry personnel to the same standards of excellence.

"The partnership has been great," Ochoa said. "Going back 15 years ago when we started talking about partnership, and looking at models in other states, it is great to finally see something coming to fruition with everyone's input -- industry, Caltrans academia. This is a really a great thing that I see for the future."

Added UNR's Hand in an interview after the conclusion of the workshop: "I think the best thing about the experience was having everyone in the room to make sure the program is successful. To dedicate three days is a significant investment in time and its obvious people care about the success of the program. It's great seeing everyone working together."

## CalAPA

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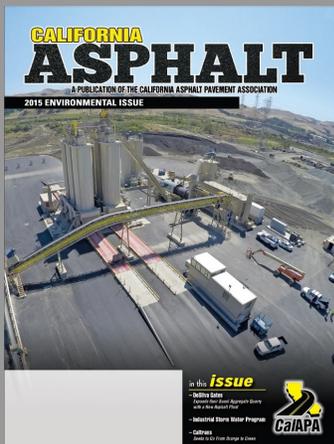


*The kickoff Joint Training & Certification kickoff meeting at CSUS.*

## BACK ISSUES

Did you miss an issue of the *California Asphalt Insider*? No problem! Past editions of the newsletter are available at the CalAPA newsletter [archive page](#)

## MAGAZINE



CalAPA produces a highly regarded magazine, *California Asphalt*, and an annual membership directory. To view current and past issues of the magazine, click [HERE](#).

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## → Caltrans-industry discuss 2017 tech priorities during Rock Products Committee meeting; Bhullar returns as State Pavement Engineer

The Caltrans-industry Rock Products Committee recently reconvened for the first time in 2017. The group consists of Caltrans and industry representatives that oversee the development of Caltrans specifications, technical directions and other technical activities.

The RPC welcomed back Jesse Bhullar, Caltrans State Pavement Engineer, to the RPC. He returned to his role in early January after a brief stint with the Traffic Division. Bhullar shared with the committee comments on his observations since his return. These included a need for the RPC to focus on a proactive agenda, to utilize third-party observations of their effectiveness, and improve tracking and accountability of project delivery.

### TECH REPORT

The Jan. 18 meeting included an update and discussion of several important RPC initiatives. They include:

- The various RPC Task Groups are submitting proposals for new projects. These will be considered and prioritized. Since the Asphalt Task Group has several outstanding projects, the ATG will need to re-prioritize existing work in conjunction with identifying new projects for consideration.
- Joint Training & Certification program is underway with a training module review. Caltrans has finalized program management with Long Beach State and they have identified San Jose State as their Northern California partner. They are also conducting a search for a new Caltrans program manager to replace Al Ochoa, who was serving as program manager on a

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- temporary assignment.
- Industry continued to stress the importance of consistent implementation and interpretation of specifications throughout the department.
  - The "Operating Principles Group" has made progress after their second meeting. However, the group has not scheduled follow-up meetings. This group is tasked with developing the protocol and principles that industry and Caltrans will follow to develop "Street Ready" specifications, develop "Performance" specifications, and implement the specifications uniformly throughout the state.
  - Caltrans announced a statewide initiative to focus on sustainability in pavements. The RPC is asking the task groups to discuss sustainable material, processes and other possible initiatives in their various sub-task groups.



**Jesse Bhullar**

Additional information about the meeting and other Caltrans activities will be discussed at the next CalAPA member-only Technical Advisory Committee meeting to be held on Friday, Feb. 10 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at CalAPA offices at 1550 Harbor Blvd., Second Floor, West Sacramento, and via teleconference. For more information, contact CalAPA Director of Technical Services Brandon Milar at (916) 995-0086.



*CalAPA hosted the industry pre-meeting of the Rock Products Committee Jan. 18 in the association's West Sacramento offices.*

## → Tech Term of the Week

*Each week we highlight a word, acronym or other reference commonly used in the asphalt pavement industry in California.*

**FIBER MODIFIED SEALANT:** Generally a hot-applied sealant that is composed of unmodified or modified asphalt cement and heat resistant polymeric fibers. It is commonly used to seal cracks in asphalt concrete pavements.

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→ Quote of the Week

"There is no darkness but ignorance."

William Shakespeare

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We hope you enjoy CalAPA's *Asphalt Insider*. We are committed to providing you with the most up-to-date information on technical issues, regulation, news and events in California that may impact the asphalt pavement industry. Click [HERE](#) to contact us with any comments or suggestions.

Sincerely,

**Russell W. Snyder, CAE**  
Executive Director  
California Asphalt Pavement Association (CalAPA)

The *California Asphalt Insider* is an official publication of the California Asphalt Pavement Association. For more information or to inquire about membership, call (916) 791-5044, or click [HERE](#) to send us an e-mail.  
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