

CALIFORNIA ASPHALT INSIDER

The latest news and views from the California Asphalt Pavement Association

Vol. 10, Issue 45 <> Nov. 6, 2017



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CALENDAR

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

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JOIN US!

Southern California
Contractors' Committee
'End Zone' mixer
Monday, Nov. 6
4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Karl Strauss Brewing
Company, 2390 E.
Orangewood Ave., Irvine
Details [HERE](#).
Contact: Sophie You at (916)
791-5044

*

SAVE THE DATE!

CalAPA Annual Dinner
Thursday, Jan. 18, 2018
Jonathan Club

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.

→ Caltrans unveils new on-line database to search for certified materials labs, testing personnel

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) recently rolled out an on-line database that allows anyone to check the certification status of testing personnel and laboratories statewide.

The "Statewide Independent Assurance Database" was developed by the Caltrans Materials Engineering & Testing Services (METS) to allow Independent Assurance (IA) staff the ability to easily submit tester and laboratory information into Caltrans' database via the internet. The website serves as



a central repository for this information, which will include certification/accreditation scope and expiration dates. Previously, each district IA office maintained their own records and anyone seeking to determine the status of a lab or tester needed to contact the district IA representative.

The website has been populated with data and is deemed accurate, but Caltrans invited industry representatives, including CalAPA, to test the website over the summer and verify if the information matches their own records before it was officially unveiled last month. Click [HERE](#) to go to the website. It can also be found via a link from the main METS web page [HERE](#). The IA website, which includes links to various reports and the department's reference sample program, can be found [HERE](#).

To provide feedback on the website functionality, contact Jeremy Peterson-Self of Caltrans at: [jeremy\(dot\)peterson-self\(at\)dot9dot\)ca\(dot\)gov](mailto:jeremy(dot)peterson-self(at)dot9dot)ca(dot)gov), or call (916) 227-7162.

To provide feedback on the accuracy of records in the database, contact your local Caltrans Independent Assurance representative. A contact list of Caltrans IA personnel can be found [HERE](#).

Editor's Note: The "@" symbol and the "." symbol in the e-mail address above has been replaced by ("at") and ("dot") to deter malicious spam software.

→ As SB1 fuel taxes kick in, plenty of debate over cost, benefits

California's landmark transportation investment bill, SB1, showed up at the gas pump last week, and so did a bunch of road improvement

545 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles.

For sponsorship information, contact Sophie You at (916) 791-5044

Details soon!

*

SAVE THE DATES!

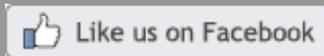
Spring Asphalt Pavement Conference & Equipment Expo

April 25 & 26, 2018

Doubletree Hotel, 222 N. Vineyard Ave., Ontario.

For sponsorship and exhibitor information, contact Sophie You at (916) 791-5044

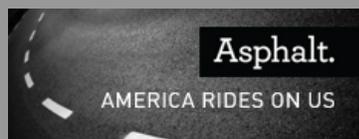
SOCIALIZE



CHOOSE ASPHALT

Asphalt is used on about 93 percent of paved roads in California and across the U.S.

Why? Because it's smooth, quiet, safe, durable and 100 percent recyclable. Visit the [Asphalt Pavement Alliance](#) website learn more about why asphalt is the right choice now more than ever.



GET TECHNICAL

projects across the state that SB1 made possible.

The key feature of the Road Repair & Accountability Act of 2017 was a financing mechanism that included the first gas tax increase at the pump since the early 1990s. It will generate an estimated \$5.2 billion per year. As noted by some commentators, the 12-cent-per-gallon gas tax hit at the same time as California refineries switched to a lower-cost winter blend of gasoline, which made the tax increase barely noticeable to many motorists.

Still, SB1 opponents used the occasion to renew criticism of the measure that passed the Legislature earlier this year by a two-thirds majority, and to tout a threatened ballot measure to repeal the tax.

Fix Our Roads, a broad coalition that includes local governments, business, labor and transportation advocates, including CalAPA, responded with a blunt statement:

"California drivers will have safer, less congested roads thanks to SB1. Every single community in California will receive funding to make road safety improvements, fill potholes, and repair local streets, freeways, bridges and overpasses. And SB1 comes with strict accountability requirements to reduce bureaucracy and ensure funds only go to transportation."



At the same time, newly updated lists of SB1 transportation improvement projects across the state were released to the public. You can view them [HERE](#).

In addition, a comprehensive list was released showing how SB1 funding will flow to every city and county in California, including many that have massive backlogs of deteriorating roads and other transportation infrastructure. You can view the list [HERE](#).

Some of the debate has been fiercest in the North State, home to many conservative Republican legislators and members of Congress, where one local newspaper, the *Chico Enterprise Record*, editorialized against the tax, alternately describing it as a "stealth tax" and "chicanery." A response to the newspaper sent by CalAPA noted that SB1 opponents have not put forward any credible alternative to help pay to repair California's crumbling roads.

CalAPA member Rene Vercruyssen, a registered Republican, also made his thoughts known in the same newspaper, in the form of a letter to the editor published last week. Vercruyssen wrote: "While our local Republicans grieve their failures at their protest, I will be attending the ribbon-cutting on Clark Road in celebration of having just completed a \$29 million safety improvement project in our community. If the Republicans continue to fail in setting the 'right' priorities in Sacramento, and obstructing the road-repair funding solutions of today it may be the last one we get to celebrate."

To learn more about SB1, click [HERE](#) to visit the Fix Our Roads website.

→ In focus: Bidder inquiries

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the Aug. 10, 2015 issue of "California Asphalt Insider."

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.



CalAPA

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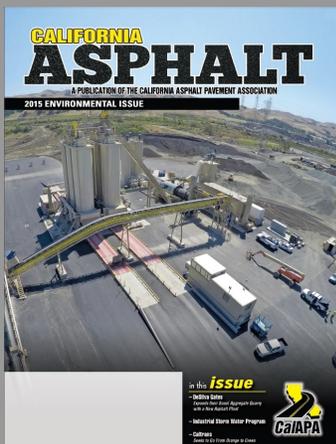
Main office:
1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 211
West Sacramento, CA 95691

(916) 791-5044 (phone)

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



An important feature of the public works bidding process is the Bidder Inquiry, which gives the contractor an opportunity to clarify something in the bid documents prior to bidding and, it is hoped, results in more accurate bids and reduced conflicts and claims on projects.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has an established process for handling Bidder Inquiries, and it is the department's policy to answer inquiries in a timely manner with helpful information. In the interest of fairness, an answer to one bidder's question is shared with all potential bidders.



In the real world, however, there are times when the answer to a Bidder Inquiry is not to a contractor's satisfaction. Many factors can contribute to this on both sides. Since the Bidder Inquiry process begins with the contractor, the following are some common-sense best practices contractors should consider before submitting a Bidder Inquiry:

- Try to get a Bidder Inquiry submitted as soon as possible -- at least two weeks in advance is a good rule of thumb -- to give the department ample time to research the question and provide a meaningful answer. Remember, public works contracts are subject to a dizzying array of laws, rules and regulations that Caltrans must be mindful of when answering Bidder Inquiries. Many sets of eyes may need to see a question, and the proposed answer, before it is published.
- Confine a Bidder Inquiry to one specific topic. Keep it as narrow as possible. More than one issue should result in more than one inquiry.
- Try to be as brief as possible. Use short, declarative sentences and plain language with a minimum of punctuation.
- Do not be critical. Avoid opinions or commentary.
- Be as specific as possible when pointing out something in the bid package. Reference the exact section, page, paragraph, line or even word or number in the specifications or bid documents, or the appropriate page of the plans.
- If the origin of a Bidder Inquiry is a supplier, be sure you fully understand the issue before sending forward the Bidder Inquiry. Work closely with the supplier in crafting the Bidder Inquiry so that it is a concise and accurate description of the issue.
- Reference other relevant information that may be illuminating, and be specific as to where it can be located.

Remember: A Bidder Inquiry is educational. The goal, which serves the interests of both the project owner and the bidder, is to make sure bids are accurate, there is a level playing field among bidders, and to avoid misunderstandings that could result in conflict, claims and other entanglements on the project that are in no one's best interests.

Bidder Inquiries have become increasingly important for projects that include asphalt because so much has changed in recent years with regard to Caltrans specifications, including complex provisions governing sampling, testing, construction, pavement smoothness and acceptance. Sometimes a bidder inquiry results in an addendum to the contract.

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

For advertising sales information, click [HERE](#) or call Kerry Hoover with Construction Marketing Services at (909) 772-3121.

STAY INFORMED



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CalAPA's Strategic Plan calls for the association to work collaboratively with all public agencies, including identifying best practices to continuously improve asphalt pavements, and that extends to the processes that govern how the industry and agencies work together to deliver transportation improvements in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. For more information, including an important disclaimer about Bidder Inquiries, click [HERE](#) to visit the Caltrans Bidder Inquiry webpage.

Our special thanks to Jack Van Kirk with CalAPA member George Reed/Basic Resources for his assistance in developing this guidance. Van Kirk is co-chair of the Asphalt Task Group within the joint Caltrans-industry Rock Products Committee.

→ Tech Term of the Week

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

HAMBURG WHEEL TRACK TEST (HWT): A test to determine rutting resistance of asphalt pavements. A core sample is placed in the HWT machine and a steel wheel passes over it for a set number of passes and any surface deformations are measured and reported.

→ Quote of the Week

"To succeed, jump as quickly at opportunities as you do at conclusions."

Benjamin Franklin

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, analysis 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)

[HERE](#) to view our "hosted" training class flier, or contact CalAPA at (916) 791-5044 for details. This service is available to public agencies and CalAPA members only.



For more information, click [HERE](#).

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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