

CALIFORNIA ASPHALT INSIDER

The latest news and views from the California Asphalt Pavement Association
Vol. 12, Issue 52 <> Dec. 30, 2019



Est. 1953
www.calapa.net

IN THIS ISSUE

[The year in review: Our Top 10 news stories for 2019](#)

[Annual equipment issue of CalAPA's California Asphalt magazine now on-line](#)

[Tech Term of the Week: Rock](#)

[Pavement Pointer of the Week: During compaction](#)

[Quote of the Week: Vivek Ranadive](#)

CALENDAR

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

*

SEATS GOING FAST!
'Asphalt Pavement 101' class

Tuesday, Jan. 14, 8 a.m. to noon
University of Phoenix, 9645 Granite Ridge Drive, San Diego
Contact: Sophie You (916) 791-5044
Register [HERE](#).

*

SIGN-UP NOW!
CalAPA Annual Dinner
Thursday, Jan. 16, 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Jonathan Club, 545 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles.
Contact Sophie You at (916) 791-5044 for sponsorship and

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.

→ The year in review: Our picks for the Top 10 news stories that impacted the asphalt pavement industry in California in 2019

Editor's Note: As 2019 draws to a close, we highlight our choices for the Top 10 stories that impacted the asphalt industry in California over the past year. Click [HERE](#) for our Top 10 stories of 2018. Look for our 2020 predictions in next week's "issue of the newsletter."

BONUS: See our picks for the top stories of the past decade at the end of this story.

No. 1. The fight for transportation dollars is rekindled

A major influx of SB1 transportation funding, more than \$5 billion per year, began appearing across the state in the form of state and local road and bridge repair work, but persistent reports that vast areas of the state were not seeing any appreciable activity continued to dog elected officials and policy-makers in 2019. Senate Bill 1 (SB1), passed by a two-thirds "super majority" of the Legislature in 2017, and protected by voters in a contentious 2018 ballot fight, raised fuel taxes and fees to generate more than \$5 billion per year to address California's deferred road and bridge maintenance crisis.

On Sept. 20, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that he was directing state agencies to "leverage" \$5 billion per year in transportation funding toward helping reverse a trend of increased fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions

associated with the transportation sector. The announcement immediately angered road-builders and anti-tax advocates. Even more controversy erupted when, on Oct. 1, Caltrans released an inter-regional transportation plan that recommended removing money previously designated for high-profile highway projects in the Central Valley. The California State Transportation Agency issued a statement on Oct. 4 clarifying that SB1 dollars were protected by the State Constitution and therefore could not be used for other purposes. It did nothing to prevent the avalanche of negative news coverage, however. An Oct. 8 *Sacramento Bee* newspaper headline, for example, stated: "California highway projects could lose gas tax funding as Newsom shifts money to mass transit." The *Los Angeles Times* on Oct. 15 carried a story over the headline, "Criticism hounds Gov. Gavin Newsom over his plans for California tax dollars." CalAPA designated the policing of SB1 dollars as its No. 1 legislative priority, and that stance was also adopted by Transportation California, a

**YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK
REBUILDING CALIFORNIA**



www.rebuildingca.ca.gov

BE WORK ZONE ALERT™



**FIXING YOUR
ROADS**

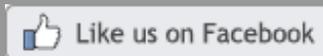
#RebuildingCA & the California Asphalt Pavement Association

table-reservation information. Details [HERE](#).

*

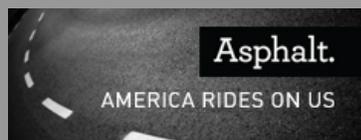
REGISTRATION OPEN
Annual Asphalt Pavement Conference
April 15-17, 2020
Disney's Grand Californian Hotel & Spa, 1600 S. Disneyland Drive, Anaheim
Contact Sophie You at (916) 791-5044 for sponsorship and exhibitor information.
Details [HERE](#).

SOCIALIZE



CHOOSE ASPHALT

Asphalt is used on about 95 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

Are you an engineer, designer or technical professional who makes

coalition of SB1 stakeholders, including CalAPA. A key feature of this priority is for SB1 stakeholders to press for more transparency and reporting with regard to how SB1 dollars are utilized. Funding for the Central Valley projects was eventually restored, but it was a lesson for all concerned that the fight for improving transportation in California was far from over. As CalAPA Legislative Committee Chairman Rene Verccruyssen of Knife River put it in a commentary that ran in California Asphalt magazine: "What this boils down to is a basic principle: Do what you say you are going to do. SB1 was titled the 'Road Repair & Accountability Act' because it was meant to 'repair roads' and hold our elected officials and government bureaucrats 'accountable' if they did not deliver on those promises. Our association, for one, will continue to be at the vanguard of making sure that all transportation dollars are used in a manner for which they were intended, and that our fellow Californians get the maximum return on their investments and that roads are noticeably smoother, safer and less congested. It's only fair."

No. 2. New law on independent contractors upends many industries

A somewhat obscure court ruling about how independent contractors are utilized in California became a high-stakes legislative battle in 2019 that might be a warmup to even bigger fights in 2020 and beyond. The 2018 ruling, *Dynamex West Operations vs. Superior Court of Los Angeles*, resulted in a new criteria to determine if a worker is an employee or an independent contractor. The case had major implications for numerous industries, including the asphalt pavement and construction industries, which rely heavily on independent contractors for trucking and other services. Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, D-San Diego (80th Assembly District), introduced a bill in the Legislature, AB5, that sought to incorporate the court ruling into state law, and her bill was approved by the Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Gavin Newsom. It will take effect Jan. 1. Numerous business groups and industries have expressed concerns that AB5 will be harmful to workers and businesses, and are clamoring for changes. Meanwhile, the California Trucking Association has filed a lawsuit, and a ballot fight is possible, even as other groups are seeking changes to AB5. Anticipating a crush of questions, the State Labor and Workforce Development Agency created a website of information about the new law, including a "Frequently Asked Questions" area for both workers and employers. The website can be accessed [HERE](#).



No. 3. New Caltrans pavement smoothness specifications

Caltrans pavement smoothness specifications were mired in controversy ever since they were first rolled out in 2014. As the complaints and lawsuits piled up, the specs attracted the attention of elected officials and the news media. By 2018, CalAPA and several other construction trade associations had designated the problematic smoothness specifications as the No. 1 concern with performing Caltrans work. In 2018 the department announced it would undertake an industry-agency collaboration to develop new smoothness specifications, which took most of the year to complete. In early 2019 Caltrans released its long-awaited guidance to Caltrans engineers that made major changes to its pavement smoothness specifications for existing asphalt pavement projects. The Construction Procedure Directive (CPD 19-6), dated March 4, 2019, was posted on the Caltrans website, along with various supporting documents. The new specification language began appearing in projects in the months that followed. By Oct. 17, Caltrans was pleased enough with the results that it was handing out awards to the

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

California Asphalt Pavement Association (CalAPA)

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 981300
West Sacramento, CA 95798

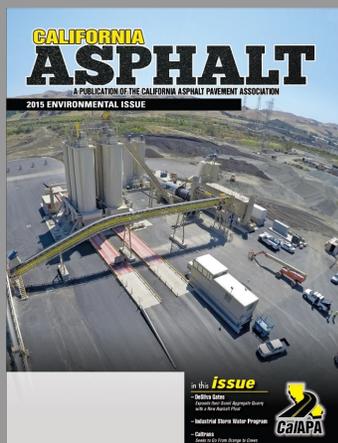
Main office:
1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 211
West Sacramento, CA 95691

(916) 791-5044 (phone)

BACK ISSUES

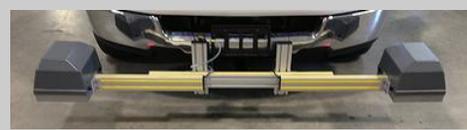
Did you miss an issue of the *California Asphalt Insider*? No problem! Past editions of the newsletter are available at the CalAPA newsletter [archive page](#).

MAGAZINE



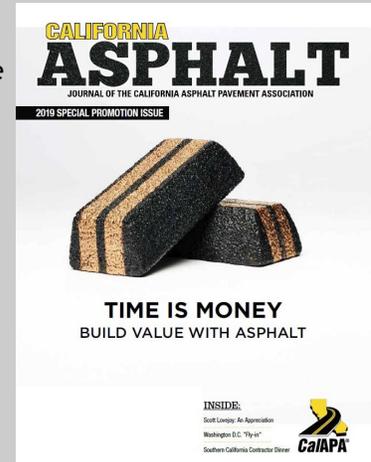
CalAPA produces a highly regarded magazine, *California Asphalt*, and an annual membership directory.

various participants in the pavement smoothness task force. "Partnership is about listening and learning. I think this is what partnership is about -- finding something, working on it and getting it done," said Steve Takigawa, Caltrans Deputy Director for Maintenance & Operations during the award presentation at Caltrans Headquarters in downtown Sacramento. "I appreciate that."



No. 4. Coordinated asphalt promotion effort kicks into high gear

A multi-year effort to develop a more organized, consistent and effective way to promote asphalt pavements produced a bumper-crop of marketing assets in 2019 that were deployed nationwide, including across California. The videos, advertisements, info-graphics and social media content were arrayed around the core themes of asphalt's value, versatility and sustainability. CalAPA showcased the campaign in 2019 in its magazine, *California Asphalt*. As the various stages of the campaign came on line, the consortium of funders, including the National Asphalt Pavement Association, the Asphalt Institute and the State Asphalt Pavement Associations group that included CalAPA, engaged in robust discussions about the competitive environment and strategies going forward.



No. 5. Washington dysfunction pushes off infrastructure deal

A grand bargain on infrastructure at the federal level remained elusive in 2019 as Washington was consumed with investigations, scandal and only the third impeachment of a president in U.S. history. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California walked out of a White House meeting on the topic in the Spring, and another prominent politician from California, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, accused House Democrats of partisanship as attention turned to the 2020 presidential election campaign. Despite the distractions, both houses of Congress managed to agree on a federal spending plan to avoid a repeat of 2018's record government shutdown. The heavy lift in Washington will be to align program spending with revenues, as was done with previous comprehensive transportation bills such as ISTEA (1991) and the more recent FAST Act passed in 2015.



NAPA's Jay Hansen spoke at CalAPA's Fall Conference on Nov. 5 in Sacramento on the topic, warning that if nothing comprehensive is done "this is the nightmare scenario" for long-term planning for both agencies and the construction industry.

No. 6: Leadership changes at Caltrans

The California Department of Transportation continued to experience major leadership changes in 2019. In April, newly elected Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the appointment of former Federal Highway Administration official David S. Kim to be Secretary of Transportation. On Sept. 3, the governor appointed Toks Omishakin as director of Caltrans. Omishakin was a deputy commissioner for environment

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

SUBSCRIBE!

2NBS2CKIBEI

Click [HERE](#) to receive *California Asphalt Insider* each week via e-mail FREE! Or visit our website at: www.calapa.net

GET CERTIFIED!



The Caltrans-industry Joint Training & Certification Program (JTCP) for materials technicians is holding classes in Northern and Southern California. Click [HERE](#) to visit our JTCP resource page to learn more.

DESIGN!

PAVExpress
Specify & Verify Pavement
Designs Online for Free
www.pavexpressdesign.com

To visit the PAVExpress website, click [HERE](#). To view the companion website, PaveInstruct, click [HERE](#).

LEARN!

We can bring CalAPA's popular training classes to

and planning at the Tennessee Department of Transportation. The governor also named James Davis as chief deputy director of the department. Davis had been a special advisor to the Caltrans director and SB1 program manager and served on other engineering-related positions since 1988. Several other key officials who interact with the asphalt pavement industry also announced their retirement, including former Director Laurie Berman, Chief Engineer Karla Sutcliffe and State Materials Engineer Dan Speer. Other departures and organizational changes are expected in 2020.



Toks Omishakin

No. 7: Long-life asphalt pavement project launched on I-5

In the most significant application of the design strategy to date, Caltrans commenced work on a long-life asphalt pavement project for a section of Interstate 5 near downtown Sacramento in 2019, becoming the latest such project to boast a 40-plus design life with minimal maintenance. CalAPA members Granite Construction and Teichert Materials teamed up to build the \$370 million Interstate 5 Corridor Enhancement Project that will ultimately rehabilitate 67 lane-miles of pavement, ramps and connectors and is a marquee demonstration of SB1 state transportation funds in action. The project will utilize more than 600,000 tons of asphalt. Caltrans utilized long-life (perpetual) pavement design strategies on major reconstruction projects on the 710 Freeway in Los Angeles County, I-80 in Solano County between Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area, and on projects on Interstate 5 in the North State, garnering numerous awards, including a "Pavement Pioneer" award presented to Caltrans by the National Asphalt Pavement Association.

No. 8: Community air monitoring law generates confusion

A new community air monitoring law moved toward wide implementation in 2019, creating anxiety and confusion as air-quality regulators, community leaders and industrial businesses struggled to follow its complex web of reporting requirements. According to the California Air Resources Board, the goal of the Community Air Protection Program (CAPP), known by the bill number, AB617, that led to its creation, is to "reduce exposure in communities most impacted



by air pollution." For much of 2019 the agency held hearings and developed detailed rules to implement the program. AB617 was originally introduced in the Legislature two years ago by Assemblywoman Christina Garcia, D-Bell Gardens (58th Assembly District). The bill, which was signed into law by then-Gov. Jerry Brown, requires CARB, working with local air districts, to develop a uniform statewide system of annual monitoring and reporting of emissions from stationary sources, with criminal and civil penalties for non-compliance, and support the formation of local community air boards. CalAPA and other trade associations continue to engage with CARB on AB617 implementation issues.

No. 9: 'Complete Streets' bill vetoed by governor

A bill opposed by CalAPA as undermining the intent of SB1 was vetoed by Gov. Gavin Newsom. The bill, SB127 by Sen. Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco, would have directed the California Department of Transportation to consider so-called "complete streets" elements when designing road improvements. The bill "creates a prescriptive and costly approach" to transportation system improvements, the governor said in his Oct. 12 veto message. CalAPA was one of the early opponents of the bill, pointing out that it is already the stated policy of Caltrans to incorporate the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians and other modes of travel when planning and designing

your facility at a date and time convenient to you! Click [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.



improvements on the state highway system. As the bill made its way to the governor's desk, it picked up opposition from SB1 coalition partners, including CalAPA-supported Transportation California. Bicycle advocates were incensed by the veto, calling the bill a victim of "the forces of Big Pavement."

No. 10. Work-force challenge ever-present in 2019

As highlighted throughout the year in CalAPA publications and events, the workforce challenge continued to press on the asphalt industry and public agencies in California in 2019 as an aging workforce headed off to retirement and there were not enough qualified workers in the pipeline to replace them. Hiring managers continued to report difficulties in finding field personnel, including craft workers, as well as technical and engineering personnel.



AFTERWORD:

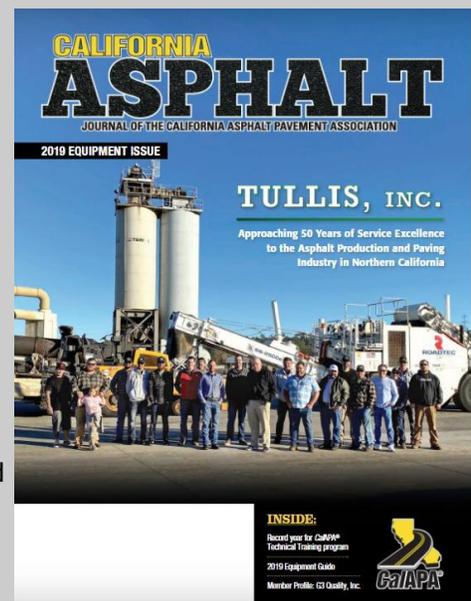
Since 2020 is upon us, it seemed worth mentioning the top stories of the past decade. We have chosen three: **No. 1.** The Great Recession. Experts say the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression began in December of 2007 and ended in June of 2009, but the effects of the severe downturn were felt for many years afterward, resulting in layoffs, consolidation and reduced budgets for agencies and companies well into mid-decade. **No. 2:** A global glut on oil supplies, contributing to the drop in oil prices and, by extension, the price of liquid asphalt for the latter part of the decade. **No. 3 (TIE):** The passage of SB1, the Road Repair & Accountability Act of 2017, which increased fuel taxes and fees for the first time since the early 1990s to help pay for transportation improvements; and the defeat of Proposition 6 on the Nov. 6, 2018 ballot, which would have repealed the taxes that were part of SB1.

→ Annual equipment issue of CalAPA's *California Asphalt* magazine now on-line

The annual equipment issue of *California Asphalt*, the official magazine of the California Asphalt Pavement Association, will be arriving in mailboxes this week. An on-line version of the magazine can be viewed [HERE](#).

The issue features a profile of new CalAPA North State producer member Tullis, Inc., as well as an associate member profile of G3 Quality, Inc. The issue also features a roundup of CalAPA's technical training classes, and also an equipment guide that is a popular reference all year long.

California Asphalt magazine, is the go-to source for exclusive, in-depth analysis of issues, trends and leaders impacting the asphalt industry in California now and in the future. To view an archive of past issues of the magazine, click [HERE](#).



One of the best ways for companies to build and strengthen brand identity for the industry is to advertise in the magazine, which is distributed to nearly 5,000 readers in California and across the United States, including CalAPA members, public works agency directors, engineers, contractors and other influencers. For an advertisement rate sheet, click [HERE](#), or contact Kerry Hoover with Construction Marketing Services at (909) 772-3121.

→ Tech Term of the Week

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

ROCK: From which crushed stone, sand, and gravel are made; the rock most suitable for making good aggregates.

→ Paving Pointer of the Week

Each week we highlight a key point or best practice of interest to asphalt paving crews, inspectors and others working in the field. We welcome suggestions. More tips can be found in our Asphalt Parking Lot Construction Checklist [HERE](#).

DURING THE PAVING OPERATION: Ask yourself: What is the specified compacted thickness in inches? How thick is the crew laying the mixture prior to compaction? A rule of thumb is that a loose mat compacts a quarter inch per 1 inch of thickness. Is the finished mat smooth with no deviations greater than ¼ inch over 10 feet?

→ Quote of the Week

"It's OK to fail. Just fail fast."

Vivek Ranadive

→ Holiday hours

CalAPA's offices will be closed on Wednesday, Jan. 1 in observance of the New Year's Day Holiday. The offices will reopen on Thursday, Jan. 2 during regular business hours.

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, events and trends 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)®

