

# CALIFORNIA ASPHALT INSIDER

The latest news and views from the California Asphalt Pavement Association  
Vol. 13, Issue 1 <> Jan. 6, 2020



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## CALENDAR

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

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### **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](#).

\*

### **NEW CLASS ADDED!**

'Asphalt Pavement 101' class

Wednesday, Jan. 15, 8 a.m. to noon

University of Phoenix  
3110 E. Guasti Road, Suite 100, Ontario

Contact; Sophie You (916) 791-5044

## 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.

## → [A look ahead: Our predictions for the Top 10 stories that will impact the asphalt industry in California in 2020](#)

**Editor's note:** Last week we offered our completely subjective Top 10 news stories of 2019. You can read the story [HERE](#). This week we're back with our fearless prognostications for 2020. If you would like to see how we fared with our predictions a year ago, you can read that story

[HERE](#). For more detailed information and analysis, be sure to look for the 2020 annual forecast issue of CalAPA's official magazine, "California Asphalt," which will hit mailboxes later this month.

### 1. SB1 monitoring

Turning transportation dollars into construction projects will be a top focus in 2020 as voters, taxpayers and transportation system users look for tangible evidence that they are getting a return on investment for the first increase in the state's gas tax since the 1990s. Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair & Accountability Act of 2017, has pumped more than \$5 billion per year into state and local transportation budgets.

When the governor announced last year that he wanted to "leverage" \$5 billion a year in transportation dollars to help reduce a trend of increased fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in California, transportation advocates cried foul.

Although the governor's announcement has been blunted somewhat by subsequent clarifications issued by his transportation agency, there will be a lot of eyeballs following those dollars from the pump to the pavement in 2020, including hearings by the California Transportation Commission, reports by the state's new Inspector General for transportation, and retooled reporting by the California Department of Transportation.

### 2. AB5 unleashes a flurry of legal, legislative activity

Assembly Bill 5, authored by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, D-San Diego, sought to bring some clarity to a landmark court ruling from 2018 on independent contractors, but with its many exemptions and ambiguities, it did just the opposite. Snared in AB5's web was a whole host of industries, from ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft, to freelance writers, artists and others. Trucking conducted by independent contractors was the biggest impact to the asphalt pavement industry in California, and a lawsuit was filed by the California Trucking Association that held up part of the law while the case drags into 2020. The Legislature will attempt to fix some of SB5's most problematic provisions and more legal challenges and a

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

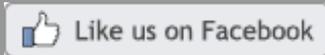
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### **REGISTRATION OPEN**

**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](#).

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## **SOCIALIZE**



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## **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.

possible ballot fight will dominate the debate over SB5 in 2020 and beyond.

### **3. Leadership changes continue apace at Caltrans**

The massive California Department of Transportation will continue to shed experienced executives and managers to retirement in 2020 even as it grapples with trying to efficiently deliver on an ambitious program made possible by SB1 tax dollars. By year's end there will be a nearly 100 percent turnover in executive management since SB1 passed and the department will be scrambling to fill the experience void as it hires thousands of new employees. An unresolved question: Will all the new faces change the culture of Caltrans, or will Caltrans change them?



### **4. Oil prices generally hold steady**

Global oil prices have remained remarkably consistent in recent years, absent major conflicts in oil producing regions and steady growth of new technologies that have opened up vast new sources of oil at home and abroad, contributing to a global glut on oil and depressing prices. Absent a major conflagration in the Middle East (hello Iran) or another major oil-producing region, oil prices should remain fairly constant in 2020 and exert a similar influence on asphalt prices, an oil-based product. If oil prices do inch higher, it could create an incentive for additional investment in extraction technologies that don't pencil out under current prices. That will further enhance supply and tamp down prices.

### **5. Big federal infrastructure deal remains elusive**

The reality TV show that Is today's Washington will enter uncharted territory in 2020 with the nation's first-ever impeached president running for re-election, and opposition party Democrats reluctant to hand him any signature legislative victories, such as a long-promised \$1 trillion infrastructure bill. Look for more partisan bickering, and scant significant legislative achievement, in 2020 as all eyes are on the November presidential election and its consequences for down-ballot candidates.



### **6. Work-force challenges persist**

In a way, the construction industry in California has never fully recovered from the Great Recession of 2008-09, which saw the industry shed workers at an unprecedented rate, and many of them vanished for good. Now the search for qualified and willing workers, both in the craft and professional ranks, will be a continuing grind for employers in 2020 and will crimp industry capacity as elected officials make grand pronouncements about addressing California's high cost, and lack of availability, of affordable housing that is sending Californians fleeing to other states.

### **7. The economy chugs along**

If California was a separate country, its economy, with a Gross Domestic Product of about \$2.7 trillion, would be the world's fifth largest, having recently overtaken Great Britain. It has been a long climb for the state, which saw itself fall to as low as 10th on the list during the Great Recession. Since then the state has added more than 2 million jobs and grown its GDP by more than \$700 billion. Home to 40 million residents, California will see another year of solid economic growth in 2020 as economic storm clouds, which to some always seem to hover in the distance, never move in to rain on the parade.



## 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.



## CalAPA

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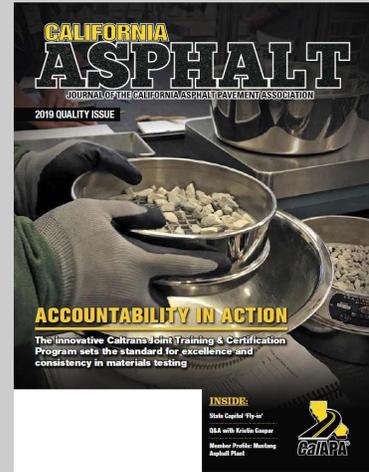
## BACK ISSUES

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

### 8. Recognition for the Joint Training & Certification Program piles up

The Caltrans-industry Joint Training & Certification Program, two decades in the making, moves out of the start-up phase and into mainstream integration, and continues to earn statewide recognition for excellence. The program held 93 classes and trained 1,671 technicians through 2019, and attracted the notice of elected officials searching for examples of "accountability" as part of SB1, the "Road Repair & Accountability Act of 2017." By year's end, the program will win at least one statewide award for innovation and receive further positive reviews by elected officials.



### 9. Long-life asphalt pavement strategy goes mainstream

Asphalt pavements that last 40 years or more with minimal maintenance will bear all the hallmarks of a mainstream pavement strategy in 2020. One of the highest-profile projects yet, the \$370 million rehabilitation of Interstate 5 near downtown Sacramento, will kick into high gear in 2020 as it ultimately utilizes more than 600,000 tons of asphalt during the duration of the project. The project joins a growing list of other long-life projects that have been completed in recent years in California, including two on Interstate 5 in the North State, on Interstate 80 in Solano County between Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area, and on the 710 Freeway in Los Angeles County. By year's end, Caltrans will identify another project to use the strategy, building on the lessons learned from the previous projects.

### 10. California companies help launch asphalt association in Nevada

A group of Nevada companies, including some familiar names that also do business in California and other nearby states, will formally organize in 2020 to form the Asphalt Pavement Association of Nevada, becoming the 40th such organization nationwide chartered to represent asphalt interests at the state level. The companies recognized the value of working collaboratively, sharing knowledge and best-practices, and speaking with a unified voice with state and local agencies and elected officials on behalf of the asphalt industry. The move will further

enhance the stature of the State Asphalt Pavement Associations (SAPA) organization, and rekindle discussions in Arizona, the last state in the Southwestern United States without a state asphalt pavement association, to consider a similar move. Although this is not strictly a California story, there will be numerous synergy opportunities between California and Nevada, as there are with California and other states on the West Coast.



### Honorable Mention:

Environmental regulation challenges in many different forms will continue to present themselves throughout the year in 2020, challenging the industry to stay on top of shifting requirements, technology and expectations in the area of air- and water-quality protection, sustainability and understanding the impact of all industries (positively and negatively) on Greenhouse Gas emissions and climate change.



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



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

In last week's newsletter there was a missing link to a new website created by the California Labor & Workforce Development Agency with information and a "Frequently Asked Questions" section on AB5, the new law on independent contractors. The link is [HERE](#).

## → Tech Term of the Week

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

**PAVEMENT REHABILITATION:** Structural enhancements that extend the service life of an existing pavement and/or improve its load-carrying capability. Rehabilitation techniques include restoration treatments and structural overlays.

## → 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](#).*

**SITE PREPARATION:** If overlaying an existing or milled surface, has the surface been cleaned/swept and given a full "tack coat" (a bonding agent between the two surfaces)? What is the specified coverage rate for the prime/tack coat? Is the application uniform? Has the material been given enough time to "break" (evaporate the water)?

## → Quote of the Week

"What's so fascinating and frustrating and great about life is that you're constantly starting over, all the time, and I love that."

**Billy Crystal**

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)®

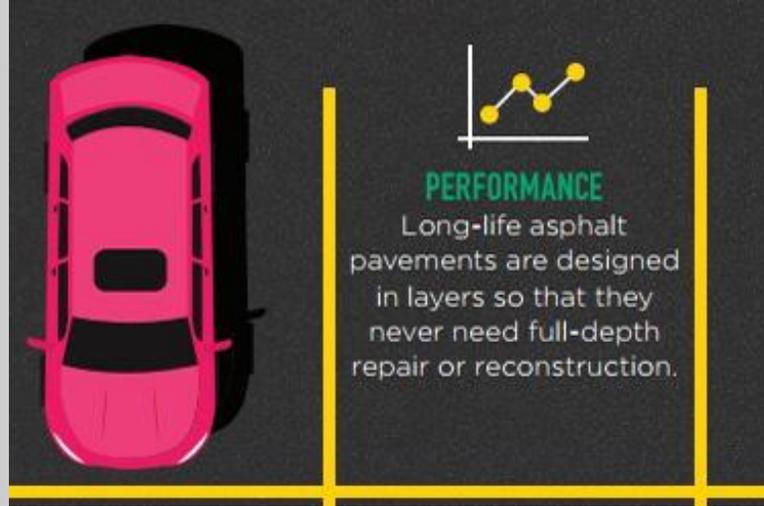
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## LEARN!

We can bring CalAPA's popular training classes to 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.



**PERFORMANCE**  
Long-life asphalt pavements are designed in layers so that they never need full-depth repair or reconstruction.

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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