



THE PRESIDENT'S SAFETY PERSPECTIVE – PROTECTING OUR ASPHALT WORKERS

Asphalt pavement work is one of the most challenging professions in the construction industry. Many people say it's more of an art than a science, which may be accurate considering the amount of choreography that is required to make it all work. From the refinery and quarry to the asphalt plant, trucking, laydown, traffic control, QA & QC labs and techs, to field inspectors, every piece of the puzzle

must fit perfectly in order to be successful.

Many in the asphalt business say that it is risky and that's probably because when something does go wrong, it is rarely inexpensive. One slight miscalculation, a missed step in the process or unforeseen issues have the potential to cause huge ripple effects in the entire operation. Whether these are human errors, equipment breakdowns or inclement weather, they almost always affect production, quality and schedule. Asphalt work is seasonal and temperature sensitive, therefore, there is always a push to "make hay while the sun shines". Combine this inherent "Push" with a high production rate where plants are typically producing up to 4,000 TN per day and highway paving covering up to four lane miles per day, there is little room for error. In addition, our paving crews are often in a new location every week and sometimes every day. When you put all of that together we can all agree that yes, it is a risky business and maybe that is what inspires and motivates us all.

However, the biggest risk we face, is the potential of getting someone hurt. Our people are our biggest asset and we must protect them at any cost. The hazards our folks face every day are huge especially when you consider the fast-paced operations, continually changing environments, working in and around specialized equipment as well as working near live traffic. We are constantly moving and don't have much time to plan our work effectively. As an industry, we must remain diligent in how we plan our work, identifying best practices and improving workplace safety for our people.

In 2021, here at CAPA, we plan to emphasize safety in the workplace by implementing several initiatives including forming a safety council, partnering with ATSSA, and providing awareness, training and tools for our members to use in their daily efforts. Our focus will be on sharing best practices that will assist our members in recognizing and mitigating hazards to ensure nobody gets hurt. There will be more to come on this very important aspect of our business.

Let me know if you have any ideas to build on what we are planning to do!

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