

NAMPA HIGHWAY DISTRICT NO. 1

Commissioners: Dick Smith, Randy Noble, Bryce D. Millar

June 28, 2021

Editor
Idaho Press
Nampa, Idaho
(submitted on-line)

Subject: Letter to the Editor – Chip Seal Season

Dear Editor:

The Nampa Highway District is to begin chip sealing operations early July and finish in early August. Though a temporary inconvenience, this is done for the benefit of all who travel these roads.

We are always asked, “Why are you working on a perfectly good road?” First of all, a “chip seal” is a film of oil sprayed on the pavement, with a layer of crushed gravel spread over the oil, and then another coat of oil sprayed over the gravel. The process only works well in hot dry weather. Chip sealing is like painting a house. It extends pavement life by sealing out moisture and the sun’s ultra violet rays. It also protects pavement from wear, and provides traction.

When a road is newly paved, we wait one to two years before sealing to allow the new asphalt to properly cure. But afterwards, it needs to be sealed and periodically resealed to prevent deterioration. Our goal is to chip seal main roads every seven years, and subdivisions every ten. This is limited by funding, however, with higher-use roads getting higher priority.

The per-mile cost of chip sealing is \$35,000, compared to \$165,000 for repaving, and \$250,000 for a complete rebuild. Properly sealed and maintained pavements last more than 30 years, but non-sealed pavements can fall apart in ten.

The district uses several practices to minimize public inconvenience when chip sealing, but we are always looking for improvements. For a full list of the roads to be chip sealed, please view our website at www.nampahighway1.com/projects select the “Roadway Projects” tab and then view the FY 2021 Seal Coat List PDF at the bottom of page. The public is invited to call me with any questions or suggestions at (208) 467-6576.

Sincerely,

Noble Lafferty, P.E.
Assistant District Engineer

