



Montana Department of Transportation  
PO Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620-1001

## Memorandum

To: MDT Administrative Staff

From: Dwane Kailey, PE  
Chief Engineer

Date: December 6, 2013

Subject: Chip Seal Guidelines

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dwane Kailey", is written over a horizontal dashed line.

This guideline supersedes and rescinds policy memo 08-01 Chip Seal.

## INTRODUCTION

It is the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) standard practice to chip seal all newly paved surfaces and use chip seals as a preventative maintenance treatment. One exception is newly paved 3/8" Grade S, which does not need to be chip sealed. Chip seals:

- Fill and seal small cracks
- Improve surface texture
- Protect from oxidation
- Prevent water filtration into the pavement structure

Chip seal is a cost effective way to protect the asphalt driving surface of a roadway.

## GUIDELINE

Where a chip seal is determined to be an appropriate treatment, it is the MDT intent to chip seal the entire pavement width including shoulders. Exceptions to this are identified in the Procedure section below.

## PROCEDURES

Consideration may be given to not chip seal the shoulders if all the following conditions are met:

- The project is on the Interstate system or the project has shoulder widths of 4 feet or greater.
- At the PFR, the review team determines that the existing chip seal condition on the shoulder will not deteriorate significantly over the 5 to 7 year performance period of the chip seal being placed on the travel lanes.
- Chip seals shall extend beyond the shoulder stripe to seal the rumble strips. Where rumble strips are not present, extend chipseal 1 foot beyond shoulder stripe.
- The reasoning and justification for not chip sealing the shoulders shall be documented in the Scope of Work.
- This exception may not be applied to 2 consecutive treatment cycles.

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