



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

Memorandum

To: Distribution

From: Matthew R. Strizich, P.E. *MRS*
Materials Engineer

Date: August 31, 2015

Subject: ½ Inch Plant Mix Surfacing

Revised guidelines for the use of ½ in plant mix surfacing on future projects are provided below. The guidelines given in my January 4, 2006 ½ in Plant Mix Surfacing Memo are rescinded and replaced with this memo.

Missoula District ½ Inch Plant Mix Surfacing

The Missoula District has experienced longevity issues on projects with ¾ inch plant mix. As such, the Department has decided to eliminate the use of ¾ inch plant mix in the Missoula District. Effective as of the first letting in January 2016, on all projects in the Missoula District, change all ¾ inch plant mix to ½ inch plant mix. Again, this change only pertains to projects in the Missoula District.

The basis for plan quantities of asphalt cement on ½ inch plant mixes are generally 0.4% higher than ¾ inch plant mix surfacing. The basis of plan quantities will need to be adjusted up 0.4% on projects where the plant mix is being changed from a ¾ inch plant mix and Surfacing Design has already provided a recommended basis of plan quantities.

All other Districts

When using Grade S, the selection of nominal aggregate size, ½ in or ¾ in, should be based on the design thickness and the condition of the existing roadway. The two sizes are considered equivalent structurally. Due to the higher binder content required for the ½ in PMS, it is more expensive although less permeable and more compactible when placed in lifts of 0.15 feet or less. Use ¾ inch nominal aggregate size Grade S plant mix surfacing unless project specific circumstances or design criteria dictate the use of ½ inch plant mix.

All ½ inch mixes should be chip sealed under the same contract as the paving unless other plans to place a chip seal are made.

The following commercial mix bid items have been created and should be used when appropriate:

Commercial Mix - ½ in-PG 58-28

Commercial Mix - ½ in-PG 64-28

Commercial Mix – ½ in-PG 70-28

Please contact the Darin Reynolds in the Surfacing Design Unit at 406-444-7650 if you have any questions with respect to the updated guidance.

E-Distribution:

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