

INFORMATION RELEASE



Office of the Director

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND
P. O. Box 2261 – Little Rock, Arkansas
Telephone (501) 569-2227

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
ArkansasHighways.com
Twitter: @AHTD

Contact:
Randy Ort

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ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT WINS 2013 PERPETUAL PAVEMENT AWARD

LITTLE ROCK (4-25) – The Asphalt Pavement Alliance (APA) has awarded the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) a 2013 Perpetual Pavement Award for a 2.3-mile section of U.S. 425 in Lincoln County. It's the fourth time that AHTD has won a Perpetual Pavement award.

To qualify for this prestigious award, a pavement must be at least 35 years old and never had a structural failure. The average interval between resurfacing of each winning pavement must be no less than 12 years. The pavement must demonstrate the characteristics expected from long-life asphalt pavements: excellence in design, quality in construction and value to the traveling public.

Engineers at the National Center for Asphalt Technology (NCAT) evaluated the nominations and validated the winners. The winning section of U.S. 425 runs from mile marker 2.71 to mile marker 5.00. When the two-lane road was originally built in 1966, AHTD constructed some sections with 6 inches of compacted-depth select material followed by 4.25-inch and 2-inch base courses with a 1.5-inch asphalt surface course. Other sections were constructed with 7-inch and 3.5-inch base courses followed by a 1.5-inch surface course.

The pavement received a 1-inch overlay in 1987 and a two-inch overlay in 2008. These surface treatments are the only repairs that this section of the road has received since 1966. The performance of the roadway is especially noteworthy because the underlying soil in this agricultural region of southeast Arkansas consists mostly of moist gray clays, which provide little support for a pavement and can lead to pavement rutting.

“The Asphalt Pavement Alliance Perpetual Pavement Award is presented to state highway agencies that have designed, constructed and maintained pavements capable of lasting much longer than pavements built using typical pavement design methods,” said Luke Stovall, civil engineer with AHTD. “The original pavement structure of this section of U.S. 425 was robust enough to withstand traffic loading above and beyond its original design purpose and then required minimal surface treatments to prolong its life. The pavement is still performing very well.

“The benefit of a perpetual pavement is that it can, in pavement terms, last indefinitely. The rehabilitation treatments are relatively low cost and easily applied, reducing the amount of time required to apply the treatment,” he said. “This is significant because these rehabilitation treatments are far less costly than reconstructing the entire pavement structure. This makes good business sense and, when designed properly, can provide a strong and durable pavement structure with a very long service life. This means fewer of the traffic interruptions caused by more extensive pavement treatments.”

As a winner of a 2013 Perpetual Award, AHTD will receive an engraved crystal obelisk, and its name and project will be added to a permanent plaque that is kept at NCAT. “One of the keys to sustainability is long life,” said Michael J. Kvach, executive director of the Asphalt Pavement Alliance. “Asphalt roads can be engineered to last indefinitely with only routine maintenance and periodic surface renewal.

“The advantages of these perpetual pavements are significant. Life cycle costs are lower because deep pavement repairs and reconstruction are avoided. User delays are reduced because minor surface rehabilitation requires shorter work windows and can avoid peak traffic hours. And there are environment benefits because minimal rehabilitation, combined with recycling any materials that are removed from the pavement surface, reduces the amount of material resources required over the pavement’s life.”

The Asphalt Pavement Alliance is a coalition of the National Asphalt Pavement Association, the Asphalt Institute and the state asphalt pavement associations. The Asphalt Pavement Alliance's mission is to establish asphalt as the preferred choice for quality, performance and the environment.

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