



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT A POLYURETHANE STRUCTURAL RE-SPRAY OR RESURFACING FOR SYNTHETIC SURFACE RUNNING TRACKS

This paper will address the topic of performing typical maintenance or remedial work for base-mat/structural spray and sealed base-mat structural spray systems.

Approximately 5 years, plus or minus, from installation and depending on volume of use and geographic location, a base-mat structural spray system will need a new application of 1C polyurethane spray to restore texture and wearing surface. This is typically performed in two applications at a rate of approximately 2.5-3.0 total pounds per square yard depending on existing surface porosity and/or wear. The new sprays are very viscous and textured, and as a result are open and vented. Any color on the prior surface that is not identical to the new spray color (i.e. white striping, graffiti, etc.) may “telegraph, shadow or ghost” through the new application. If you carefully inspect a new structural spray sample, you might notice that the black base-mat is evident through the spray applications. The black base-mat does not dominate the new spray color, but can it be seen as the spray material is viscous and vented. As a result, when a new application is installed over the existing track surface, telegraphing or shadowing of the prior striping, markings, graffiti, etc. may show through. In the majority of cases, owners find no problem with this occurrence. However, the only way to mitigate or possibly eliminate this potential issue is by adding an extra work component to a typical scope

of work for re-spraying or re-surfacing a base-mat/structural spray running track surface. This can be done one of two ways and they are as per the following options:

- 1) Use compatible marking paint to paint or “color out” the existing stripes, markings, graffiti, etc., which will mitigate or possibly eliminate the issue. This is a minimal cost option usually adding \$3,000.00-\$5,000.00 to the cost of a project.
- 2) Seal or re-seal the existing running track surface which will eliminate the issue. In the case of a base-mat/structural spray system, it is not un-common for an owner to upgrade their surface to a sealed system, thus adding improved performance, durability and longevity to the existing surface. This is a substantially more expensive option than painting over the lines, however the benefit to the owner is an upgrade to the next level system. Typical added cost, depending on size of the track, porosity, etc. is \$30,000.00-\$50,000.00.

In addition to simple resurfacing or re-spray applications and the issue of telegraphing or shadowing, there are situations where a track has been vandalized or damaged by spray painting graffiti, spilling or pouring paint, etc. When this occurs, the area has essentially been transformed into a sealed system, creating a totally different texture than a typical resurface or re-spray texture. Unless some remedial work is performed, such as sealing the remaining undamaged area, these areas will show a different texture and will be evident after final re-spray applications. A good example of something similar is an aging parking lot that is striped periodically and is now going to receive a seal coat treatment. The stripes and markings have sealed the asphalt under the paint for many years. Over time the stripe will be raised in relationship to the surrounding asphalt and have different texture. What is happening is the numerous coatings of paint have preserved the asphalt while the uncoated asphalt is deteriorating and eroding away. When the seal coating is applied, the previously striped areas will be extremely obvious because of both texture and their raised nature. The only way to remedy this differential would be to seal all of the uncoated areas until every inch of asphalt was the same height and texture as the striped areas. The same is true with track resurfacing. Unless the surrounding areas of track are raised and sealed to match the texture of the additional coating received during the damage, the damaged areas will be raised and of a different texture. The only remedy to totally eliminate this issue is through sealing as per option two above. Of course doing this is a very expensive option and unless the damaged area is raised where it presents a safety hazard or rules violation for the track, it may be prudent to allow the texture and slight elevation difference to exist. In most cases, the new striping will minimize the distraction of the damaged areas that look so evident prior to re-striping and the track will perform as intended.

Another possible remedy, but one we do not recommend, is to cut the damaged areas out and replace. The problem with this remedy is that the new areas will have joints which will open over time as they have become weak spots on the surface. In addition, it will also be virtually impossible to precisely match the texture of the unrepaired areas so you have gained nothing.

In closing, we hope we have shed some light for owners preparing to re-spray or re-surface their existing running track regardless of the reason. Please feel free to call us with any questions. Thank you!