

LTAP/HAPI 2026 Annual Paving Conference - Topics and Speakers

Speakers



David Johnson



Chris Piche



Jon Young



Nathan Roberts

8:00-8:15

Welcome

8:15-9:15

Topic: MixBusters – The Truth About Asphalt Myths

Speaker: David Johnson, P.E., Senior Regional Engineer, Asphalt Institute

Within the asphalt world, there are many long and often strongly held beliefs that may need to be examined objectively to establish if they are true or not. Together, Dave Johnson and his partner Buzz Powell, have over 70 years of experience designing, constructing, maintaining, and experimenting with asphalt pavements and have tackled some myths. They have a willingness to question and challenge various “truths” we “know” about the design, construction, and maintenance of asphalt pavements.

For this session, Dave Johnson will be discussing the following mix myths:

- Tack coat can be skipped when paving multiple lifts in short order as the fresh materials will still bond together.
- Laying an asphalt layer greater than four times NMAS will result in poor compaction.
- Do we really need big rock for strong asphalt?
- Specifications need to get more complicated if we want to improve performance

Bio: David (Dave) R. Johnson, P.E., has over 30 years of pavement-related experience and currently serves as Senior Regional Engineer with the Asphalt Institute for the Rocky Mountain Region. His background blends applied field experience, research, and instruction, including prior roles as Regional Pavement, Design, Construction, and Quality Assurance Engineer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and as an Adjunct Instructor and Research Engineer at Montana State University.

David’s research portfolio includes over a dozen projects and numerous peer-reviewed and technical publications. His focus areas include mix design, pavement preservation, performance specifications, and QA/QC methods. A frequent speaker and instructor, he is highly regarded for advancing practical understanding of

asphalt materials, construction, and maintenance within state and local agencies. He actively supports innovation in asphalt technology and sustainable infrastructure.

9:15-9:30 **Break**

9:30-10:30 **Topic:** HP (High Performing) Binders Past Present and Future
Speaker: Chris Piche, P.E., Technical Sales and Marketing Engineer, Kraton Polymers

This session reviews the evolution, applications, and performance of high-performing (HP) asphalt binders. Topics include common modifiers, successful projects, and recommended minimum specifications, along with a comparison of Hawai'i's modified binder specifications to HP binder specifications used nationally. Utah's emerging HiMOD specifications will also be introduced.

The presentation will conclude with practical insights on producing and using HP binders, from terminal operations through paving, and closes with an update on the Hawai'i DOT's HiMA Pilot Project. HP binders are a proven tool that can support improved long-term pavement performance when used appropriately.

Bio: Chris Piche is a Technical Sales and Marketing Engineer with Kraton Polymers, supporting polymer-modified and high-performing asphalt binders across North America. He holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and is a licensed Professional Engineer in multiple states.

He spent 24 years with the Illinois Department of Transportation in construction and materials, including service as a District Materials Engineer responsible for HMA inspection and specifications. He later served as an Asphalt Technical Engineer with Phillips 66, supporting multiple Midwest terminals and working extensively with polymer-modified binders, quality control, and specification compliance across more than 25 states.

Today, his work focuses on polymer formulation, specification development, and practical field implementation of high-performing binders in collaboration with DOTs and industry partners.

10:30-10:45 **Break**

10:45-11:45 **Topic:** Prime Coats versus Tack Coats – Are They Really Different?
Speaker: Jon Young, P.E., Interim Executive Director, Hawaii Asphalt Paving Industry

Both prime coats and tack coats are used in asphalt paving. Do they serve the same or different functions and are they applied at the same or different stages of the construction process?

This session will answer both questions and provide additional information about both products. Since tack coats are used in all asphalt pavement projects, the focus of the session will discuss the purpose of a tack coat, where tack coats are applied, the materials used, and other considerations. The session will end with a review of the various specifications used for tack coats in Hawaii.

Bio: Since 2011, Jon Young has been the Executive Director of HAPI. Before that he spent 10 years as a Senior Project Manager at Belt Collins Hawaii (BCH). Before BCH he spent 10 years as the Design and Construction Site Development Manager for Gentry Homes, Ltd. His experiences have provided him with the ability to see projects from the designer, contractor, and owner perspective.

11:45-12:00 **Break**

12:00-1:00 **Topic:** High Performing Parking Lots – How to Get the Most from Your New Pavement

Speaker: Nathan Roberts, P.E., Division Manager, Scotty’s Contracting and Stone

Although agencies and owners may be somewhat familiar with parking lot design and material selection, many are faced with uncertainty on how to achieve maximum longevity for their new pavement during and post construction. This session will cover asphalt placement and finishing best practices, general guidelines for introducing and staging traffic, troubleshooting various cosmetic and structural issues and suggestions for remedial efforts for when things go wrong. Session will close with a segment on asphalt maintenance and a brief Q & A session.

Bio: Nathan Roberts is a registered Professional Engineer in Kentucky and earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from Western Kentucky University in 2010. He began his career in the asphalt industry in 2009, working for Scotty’s Contracting & Stone as an intern in the Quality Control Lab. Since then, he has held various positions within the company, including estimator, project manager and area manager. He is currently the Division Manager of Bowling Green Paving and oversees a team of estimators and project managers on various commercial and DOT projects.

1:00-1:05 **Conference Closing**

1:15-1:30 **Game Show** (20 question quiz with prizes to the top five finishers)