

NTA Road Resurfacing/Resealing

What is resurfacing?

Road resurfacing is the application of a top layer to the road. Historically it was called tar seal, but these days it uses other products – primarily bitumen (quite different form tar).

Why is a road resurfaced?

Road resurfacing is renewed to extend the life span of the road beneath (maintenance), and to ensure the surface is suitably skid resistant (safety).

Maintenance resurfacing is undertaken when the existing surface seal is no longer effective. If we allow water to get through hairline cracks into the underlying pavement it will cause significant damage. Everything from potholes to complete pavement failure.

Safety surfacing is where the road has flushed and there is no texture left to give skid resistance, or where the stones have been “polished” by tyres and no longer provide skid resistance.

Who decides which road is resurfaced?

The renewals programme is governed by the guidelines and processes endorsed by the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA). All sealed roads in the district are being reviewed annually by our asset managers to assess their condition.

Following site assessments, the asset managers will compile and refine a long-term surfacing programme. In this programme we consider safety, value for money, and best long term outcome for the asset - versus available budget.

As with any industry there are continuous improvements being discovered. Some of these discoveries work well in some areas, but not in others. The asset manager has to consider what the new treatments are, and how they can be best applied to our network.

How much will it cost?

There are two basic forms of road resurfacing - chip seal and asphalt – and these both have several different variations in stone grades and bitumen products used.

While most people would all like to have asphalt roads everywhere, they are on average 4-5 times more expensive than a chip seal, and when used in the wrong places can fail quickly. The asset manager has to consider the products, assess life expectancies, consider best value for money, check traffic volumes, consider road alignments and other safety concerns, consider the strength of the underlying pavement, etc. to decide what variant of the asphalt or chip seal will suit the individual conditions best.

What monitoring will be undertaken?

Monitoring of the project is carried out by the contractor, consultant and Council staff. It will focus on quality, safety, workmanship, and achieving pre-defined service levels. Completed works are also reviewed 12 months post construction to ensure the finish product meet design requirement. Any repairs necessary during this period are completed at the contractor's expense.

How are we affected?

Prior to resurfacing, the affected residences and stakeholders will be notified via letter drops – identifying work dates and what to expect.

In case of arterial and collector roads we may employ the use of electronic message boards (VMS boards), local paper adverts and website updates in advance.

These works are reasonably quick to complete, but during works public can expect minor delays. Please slow down when passing through work sites and comply with the requests of traffic management staff.