

RECYCLE YEAR 'ROUND

Recycler gets to work spring, summer, fall and winter

WYOMING - Officials in the City of Tribune faced a problem. They were losing ground with their street maintenance program. The primed and sealed streets in this Western Kansas town of about 1,000 inhabitants were deteriorating and needed extensive repairs. The nearest asphalt plant was 90 miles away, making it too remote to transport hot mix for the repair effort. Consequently, city crews used a cold mix to do all the street repair. They had a small patching unit purchased some time ago but it was not capable of producing sufficient quantities for their needs.

After evaluating several alternatives, city officials purchased a Bagela BA10000 Asphalt Recycler. As the manufacturer's rep explains, "The Bagela recycles reclaimed asphalt by heating it and turning it back into hot mix. The unit tumbles the used asphalt in a large drum. The heating of the asphalt is accomplished by cascading the material through a stream of hot air produced by a diesel-fired burner located in an opening in one end of the drum. The flame of the burner is shielded from direct contact with the used asphalt." This is important because direct contact with the burner's flame can dry out the asphalt by driving off the volatile hydrocarbons and, in some cases, even igniting the oils in the material.

Brock Sloane, Tribune's city engineer, said city workers began stockpiling used asphalt in anticipation of receiving the recycler. After taking delivery in July, city officials hired students who were on vacation from school to help in the rehab program. They began by doing several major repairs, culminating in an 8-foot wide by 300-foot long patch that was completed in one day.

With this patch finished, officials ratcheted up the effort a step by relaying a full width, two block long street. Sloan commented that using the summer students in the city's street repair program gave the student some extra income and presented a real financial advantage to the city.

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European Roots

The Bagela BA10000 Asphalt Recycler is manufactured in Germany. Bagela has been building the recyclers for more than 10 years with more than 800 in use in Europe. "We are just beginning to introduce it into the United States," says their representative, "and is generating a lot of interest. We are really excited about the many applications to which this unit can be applied."

NORTHERN EXPOSURE

Dennis West of Star Valley Paving in Thayne, Wyoming, uses the recycler to repair parking lots for private lodges in the Jackson Hole area. His main concern is getting the work done in the short time period in the spring, between when the frost is out and the beginning of the tourist season around Memorial Day. It is also a plus that he does not have to haul the torn out asphalt away, saving trucking cost in addition to plant mix costs. West comments on his customers' motivation in selecting him as the contractor

for these jobs. "Getting the job done in the right time frame is critical, but no less so is the fact that I am recycling the asphalt. Environmental concerns are very important here and this machine fits right in with those concerns."

Tribune's use of the recycler as a large scale patching unit and Star Valley's use to meet timing and environmental considerations are variations from applications of other users. Bagela's rep points out that State Department of Transportation maintenance division have been very pleased with the different ways the recycler can be used to meet their needs. One northern state has used the unit to repair potholes and damaged roads during winter when asphalt plants are shut down. "The ability to do patching with hot mix means that the repair only needs to be done one time rather than using a temporary cold mix, which must be redone in the spring. Patches put down in the coldest part of last winter have gone through the freeze-thaw cycle of spring and the extreme heat of summer, emerging intact, without deterioration."

Mike Prussman of the Missouri DOT (MoDOT) in St. Joseph reports the agency is testing the Bagela in its road patching program, using milled asphalt as the raw material. The intent is to use it in more remote areas. Kansas has taken delivery on a unit that will be put into service in this fall's road repair program. "The unit has done a terrific job of handling each DOT's unique method of operation," comments Bagela's rep. "It is truly a year-round machine, having the versatility to fit into anybody's operation."