

## **State maintained bridges and town pavement don't mix**

This is a friendly reminder that towns should not pave over State maintained bridges that are on town roads. (Buried structures, such as culverts, are not included in this concern.)

This pavement causes several problems for the bridges. The primary concern is that pavement adds a significant amount of weight to the bridge and the abutments. This extra weight affects the capacity of the bridge and it reduces the weight the bridge can handle from cars and trucks. More pavement reduces the guardrail height that creates safety and liability issues. Pavement over a concrete wearing surfaces holds moisture and may increase the deterioration rate of the concrete. In addition, the pavement over a concrete wearing surface does not always bond. Due to this lack of bond, pot holes will show up making for a bumpy ride. If the wearing surface is of concrete and is covered with pavement, then it makes it harder for the bridge inspectors to evaluate the condition of the concrete.

As tempting as it may be to have a uniform surface along a newly reconstructed road, it is better in the long run to ask questions first, especially if there is a State maintained bridge. Call the Bridge Manager at your local DOT Division office or the Bridge Maintenance personnel in the Augusta office at 624-3580.