

6 Tips for Property Managers: Pavement & Parking Lot Maintenance

First impressions are important. As a business or property owner, your parking lot is a crucial aspect of your business, contributing to your business' overall value and appearance. Long before customers interact with your staff and learn about your business, they park in your lot. And when they leave, your parking lot is the last thing they see. Will your customers see a well-maintained lot – or something else? With proper maintenance parking lots can add value and a good first impression to your customers and commuters passing by. Here are six tips for property managers to keep your pavement and parking lot looking great.

1. **Sweep it Up!** Keep the parking lot and sidewalks swept of sand and pick up trash as needed. Dirt and debris can block water drainage as well as hide visual defects. A blocked drain will cause water buildup on the pavement which over time can result in structural damage. Hidden defects that aren't seen and addressed immediately can worsen over time creating costly repairs.
2. **Fix the cracks!** Take note of cracks over ¼" (if the crack is wider than an ink pen fix it). Cracking can occur for many reasons such as the settling of underground utilities, pipes, or the subbase. Cracks allow water, debris, and salt to get under your pavement which can deteriorate your lot creating potholes and concrete upheavals. So, when you see cracks fix them!
3. **Assess curb damage!** During the winter snow plows may run into, hit, scrape, and damage your curb. Every spring, walk around your lot and assess any damage.
4. **Identify areas of standing water!** – Look at entrances/exits, shipping and receiving docks, parking lots, and green spaces. Are there puddles or is a lake forming in the grassy areas? Places with standing water will need to be watched for deterioration. It's less expensive to repair those areas with surface patching and sealing now then to wait. A pavement that continues to deteriorate may need more invasive (costly) full depth repairs later.
5. **Re-Stripe Your Lines!** –lowa winters and snow plows can wreak havoc on your pavement, wearing off important signage and parking stall lines. Unfortunately, faded markings can also be the result of uneven surfaces. Have a professional come out and assess whether there's structural damage causing uneven surface wear or if it's just cosmetic. A well striped parking lot helps maintain traffic flow and visibility for your customers.
6. **Consider Routine Maintenance!** Without regular maintenance, the lifespan of your lot significantly diminishes. Preventative maintenance is a solution used to prevent further deterioration and mitigates the need for a complete replacement. It's also the most cost-effective solution to maximize pavement life while minimizing risk. Maintenance may include patching and repair, crack sealing, lot sweeping/cleaning, and pavement marking.