FOCUS on FACILITIES
Diocese of Cleveland Facilities Services Corporation

Preventive Maintenance of Parking Lots

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INTRODUCTION

Those responsible for preventive maintenance (PM) of parking lots know that being proactive in maintaining these locations will inherently extend the useful service life of these lots. A visual inspection of the parking area should be completed at least quarterly as the seasons can show wear and tear on the parking surfaces.

Beginning with the end of the winter, there may be damage from the snow plowing especially when there have been several snowstorms during the season. This visual inspection should include an inspection of the area adjacent to the parking lot, where the snow was pushed back or dumped e.g., concrete curbing moved or bushes damaged due to the pushing back of snow that covered these curbs or landscaped bushes.

https://www.fixasphalt.com/blog/how-much-does-commercial-snow-removal-cost-in-new-jersey

https://www.nitterhousemasonry.com/products/concrete-parking-stop-blocks/

During the winter, cracks in the parking surface, as well as areas of damage to the bituminous surface may show up. Movement of this surface can be due to expanding and contracting from the temperature extremes resulting from the wet surface, solar heat, and freezing cold nights, as well as "frost-heaves" occurring during the past winter months.

https://www.dmr.nd.gov/ndgs/documents/newsletter/2011Summer/FrostHeave.pdf

In the spring, these parking spaces may show signs of grass and/or weeds working their way through cracks in the concrete or bituminous parking surfaces due to the weather and the deterioration of the parking lot over time. With summer comes more weeds working their way through the parking lot cracks requiring an environmentally friendly weed killer sprayed on these parking surface cracks.

https://bluegrasslawn.com/clearing-way-vegetation-control

Also, in the spring, grass along the perimeter of the parking lot may have been damaged from the truck's plow digging up the grass and soil. Grass may be killed off due to the snow-melt pellets that were spread over the parking lot during or after a snowstorm, intended to limit ice build-up on the parking surface.

By summer it necessary and recommended that a qualified contractor be hired to repair parking lot surfaces damaged from the winter with repair patching areas and/or sealing cracks with hot liquid tar. These contractors have the experience, the required materials, and the tools to repair damaged parking lots.

The fall is the optimum time to reseed the grass along the perimeter that was damaged from the previous winter snowstorms and ice-melt treatments, while sealing of the surface cracks noted above should have been completed in the late spring or early summer to prevent future weed growth working its way through the cracks.

In addition to repairing damaged parking area, the parking lot markers including painted white lines designating assigned areas to park, direction of traffic flow arrows, exit designation, handicap assigned space designation, etc. should be visually inspected, including signage post conditions and conditions so noted. Oil and gas stains from automobile engine leaks are another visual inspection task to be checked when completing quarterly inspections.

Parking lot lighting needs to be inspected more frequently to ensure the parking lot provides a well-lit environment making sure lamps are operating as designed e.g., automatic on-off based on outdoor light levels as the evening comes on. In addition, light posts should be checked for rigidity and other possible damages.

One does not need to schedule a quarterly, visual inspection to routinely walk around the parking lot making sure debris, trash, etc. isn't lying on the ground or there has been damage that shouldn't wait to be repaired such as damaged signage or concrete curbing that has been moved due to a car's tire hitting the curbing.

From a quality control point-of-view, it always makes sense to create a standardized checklist in sync with the PM work order being used which, in this case will be a parking lot PM work order. For further information on PM work orders please refer back to our facility management columns, August 2019 "What a Preventive Maintenance Work Order Includes", October 2020 "A Facility Maintenance Checklist", and November 2020 "Embracing Checklists for Your Job Description".

SCHEDULED PM WORK ORDERS

We have already referenced previous facility management columns for the reader to refer back to in sync with this column but that said, the establishing of a scheduled PM work order process is essential to good facility management and to contributing to a safe and secure parking area.

To start the development of a parking lot PM work order template the type of parking lot must be taken into account with:

- The type of parking lot surface e.g., concrete or bituminous
- The age and existing conditions of the lot
- Time of year PM work would be scheduled

Work Order Special Instructions:

1. This segment of the work order is intended to be a "heads-up" to the individual assigned to complete the work order beginning with highlighting materials to bring, such as the correct cleaner for removing oil and gas leaked stains from the parked cars. Cleaners "Safety Data Sheets" (SDSs) formerly MSDSs or Material Safety Data Sheets should be kept on file.

2. Other materials, such as sealants and patch kits for small repairs e.g., cracks and/or small holes needing to be filled should be readily available depending on the size of the parking area. The same can be said for light fixtures where the light bulb(s) can be safely reached and the bulb replaced.

3. Designating suggested tools to be taken when performing the PM work order, such as safety signage e.g., wet paint or other precaution notice for drivers to read when entering the parking lot.

4. A maintenance note pad to document additional comments from a visual inspection should also be included for the maintenance person to document unscheduled work requirements and incomplete PM work due to insufficient materials and/or additional parts to be requisitioned. This note pad should include a prepared checklist of standard things to look for, noted above, when performing maintenance for comments made from visual inspection.

Tasking:

- Weekly and/or monthly parking lot cleaning to ensure an acceptable appearance, as well as a safe and secure environment.

- There should be quarterly parking lot inspection with PM work orders issued to complete the tasks at hand.

- Filling in cracks in the parking surfaces can contribute to maximizing the useful service life of the lot and with the right material and equipment noted in the "special instructions" above, many repairs may be able to be made without bringing in a contractor to complete this work.

- Depending on the PM tasks and visual inspections it may be recommended that a qualified parking lot service contractor be hired to repair damaged parking lot surface, repaint lines, lettering, etc., in lieu of the on-site maintenance person attempting to do the work without the experience and/or materials to perform the work.

SUMMARY

Everyone using parking lots will want the area to be clean, safe, and accessible void of potholes, tripping hazards and inadequate lighting. Facility managers of churches, parish buildings, senior centers, etc. have an obligation to many who come and go from the facility he, she, or they operate and maintain. It is an important job satisfaction feature of going to work, when a parking lot PM process is in place and followed because many an occupant in the building will want to acknowledge that this building is well maintained right down to the routine cleaning of the parking lots.

For more on parking lots please read our *Focus on Facilities* column this month titled, "Parking Lots-Repair, Replace, and New".

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