

Sealcoating vs. Repaving: Making the Right Decision for Your Driveway

Asphalt driveways are durable, but they are not immortal. Over time, the harsh New Jersey sun, rain, and snow take their toll. Eventually, every homeowner faces the same dilemma: "Can I just sealcoat this, or do I need to repave?" Making the wrong choice can be costly—sealcoating a failed driveway is a waste of money, while repaving a driveway that only needs maintenance is an unnecessary expense. As experts in [driveway paving NJ](#), Black Diamond Paving is here to help you distinguish between a surface-level fix and a structural necessity.

The Case for Sealcoating Sealcoating is a maintenance procedure, not a repair for structural damage. It involves applying a liquid protective layer over the existing asphalt. Think of it like sunscreen for your driveway.

- **When to Sealcoat:** You should sealcoat if your driveway is structurally sound but looks gray, dry, or has very fine "hairline" cracks.
- **The Benefits:** It restores the rich black color, protects against UV oxidation (which makes asphalt brittle), and resists oil and gas spills.
- **The Schedule:** In NJ, we recommend sealcoating every 2-3 years. Doing it too often leads to peeling; waiting too long leads to damage.

The Case for Repaving (Replacement) Repaving involves ripping out the old driveway and installing a new one. This is a construction project, not a maintenance task.

- **When to Repave:** You need to call a [driveway paving NJ](#) specialist if you see:
- **Alligator Cracking:** Interconnected cracks that look like reptile scales. This indicates sub-base failure.
- **Potholes:** Holes mean the asphalt has disintegrated completely.
- **Drainage Issues:** If water pools in the center or flows toward your garage, sealcoating cannot fix the grade. Only repaving can correct the slope.
- **Age:** If the driveway is 20+ years old and heavily weathered, it has likely reached the end of its useful life.

The Middle Ground: Resurfacing (Overlays) Sometimes, we can perform an "overlay." This involves milling down the top layer of old asphalt and paving a new 1.5-inch layer on top. This is cheaper than a full tear-out but requires the underlying stone base to be in perfect condition. In New Jersey, overlays can be risky due to frost heaves, so we always perform a rigorous core test before recommending this.

Cost vs. Value Sealcoating costs pennies per square foot, while paving costs dollars per square foot. However, sealcoating a driveway with alligator cracks is like painting over rust on a car—it hides the problem for a month, but the rot continues underneath. Investing in a new driveway solves the root cause.

Conclusion Honesty is the most important tool in our truck. At Black Diamond Paving, we will never sell you a new driveway if a patch and sealcoat will buy you another five years. Conversely, we won't sell you a sealcoating job if we know it will flake off in six months. If you are unsure about the condition of your asphalt, contact us for an honest assessment. We are the trusted name for **driveway paving NJ** because we treat your budget as if it were our own.