

Village of Winnetka

Coal Tar Ban Information Guide

What is Coal Tar?

- ◆ Coal tar is a waste material generated during coal processing (the conversion of coal to coke).
- ◆ It is often a component of certain types of sealants used to protect and beautify asphalt pavement such as residential driveways and parking lots.

Why did the Village ban it?

- ◆ Coal tar contains high levels of a class of chemical compounds known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH). Studies show that PAHs are harmful to fish and, with prolonged exposure, pose a risk of cancer in humans.
- ◆ Sunlight and vehicle traffic wears down sealants over time and sealcoat flakes are washed away by rain into bodies of water or carried away by wind into homes.
- ◆ Research conducted by the City of Austin and the U.S. Geological Survey found that PAH levels were significantly higher in water runoffs from coal tar sealed driveways.

What does the ban mean?

- ◆ As of August 19, 2014, the use of coal tar-based sealing agents is prohibited on all public and private driveways, parking lots and other roadway surfaces in the Village of Winnetka. Asphalt-based sealant products are still acceptable.
- ◆ All contractors and commercial/multi-family property owners applying pavement sealants must obtain a Pavement Sealant Applicators License through the Village (renewed annually) and confirm they do not use products that contain coal tar.
- ◆ Property owners of single family lots applying sealant themselves do not need a Pavement Sealant Applicators License.

What are my options?

- ◆ Use asphalt-based sealants.
 - Significantly lower PAH level
 - Sold in most home improvement stores
 - More common sealant used in the western United States
- ◆ Replace asphalt with concrete driveways.
- ◆ Leave driveways unsealed.



Where can I learn more?

- ◆ Contact the Village of Winnetka Public Works Department at (847) 716-3568.
- ◆ Prior to the ban, the Winnetka Environmental and Forestry Commission researched the subject and presented findings to the Village Council. To view the EFC's report on coal tar, visit <http://www.villageofwinnetka.org/government/boards-and-commissions/environmental-and-forestry-commission/water>