

# 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>