

# A BETTER WAY FOR UTILITY CUT AND **TRENCH REINSTATEMENTS**



Cost benefits of using EZ Street Asphalt





## A Better Way for Utility Cut and Trench Reinstatements

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At the end of a normal day of operation for a water service or utility cut repair, the practice is to install a standard cold mix material in the partially repaired trench to ensure it is serviceable and trafficable overnight (or across a weekend). Once the full service repair or replacement has been completed, a paving / hotmix crew will traditionally return to the site, remove all of the temporary cold mix material and re-install asphalt through the trench to create a permanent finished surface.

Using cold mix as a temporary trench repair material presents a common problem of it failing and coming out of the trench, especially in the wheel tracks. This issue can be exacerbated during wet and cold weather where potholes can grow in a matter of hours causing driver complaints and damage to vehicles. When temporary patching materials fail, it also causes damage to the roadway outside of the original trench excavation resulting in additional saw cutting and repair work during final asphalt surfacing.

Municipalities and the utility industry have performed utility cut / trench reinstatement works for so long that the added cost of this two part completion method no longer seems to register that it is wasted money. Municipal and utility companies can literally save millions of dollars every year if they are prepared to recognize that this anticipated and expensive work method can be replaced by a simpler and vastly more cost effective method.

Removing the temporary cold mix material and replacing it with asphalt adds a significant cost to the utility repair. A standard asphalt crew (excluding materials) can cost in the vicinity of \$1,500 per hour to operate. Of course every water service reinstatement will be different in size and length of time to complete. This does not even delve into the realm of utility repairs in high traffic or metro/ downtown areas. In these instances the cost can quickly skyrocket. The majority of the cost of any trench reinstatement for utility services is carried in the cost of the work crew and machinery. Installing the asphalt and the cost of dumping the waste and removed cold mix just helps the cost add up.

So, eliminating this step completely is money in the bank. *How many utility cuts, emergency repairs, water main, sewer replacements, etc. are completed by your municipality or company each year and then try to add up the cost of the asphalt re-visit? I would guarantee it's a big number although any wasted expenditure is inappropriate in this day and age.*

## What would you think about saving 90% of that expenditure.....every year?

There seems to be no argument to the benefits of fixing potholes once and not having to return to repair them is the most economical, inexpensive and "best industry practice". The utilization of materials such as EZ Street Asphalt as permanent, immediate and the most inexpensive method of dealing with potholes (especially during the spring pothole season) has grown considerably as contractors and government departments have made the advancement to modern day methods.





Unfortunately the utility sector generally remains in the “dark ages” when it comes to engaging technology advancements. Repairing trenches once and permanently is the proven future. There are millions of dollars in saved expenditure and profits to be made by one simple change to a work method.

### **EZ Street will save you money... guaranteed!!!**

EZ Street is a high performance, polymer modified asphalt. It has all the properties of asphalt and more but has been designed to provide all of the ease and workability that cold mix offers. Utilising EZ Street for the reinstatement of a utility cut will provide all of the benefits of the finished asphalt surface with only the installation costs of the temporary cold mix repair. EZ Street will allow the work crew to place the material at the end of the work day with the same labour and equipment cost that would be used to install cold mix. Once EZ Street Asphalt is in place, that’s it, the trench repair has been completed. There is no further requirement for the eventual removal of the cold mix and the replacement with asphalt. It has

already been asphalted. The use of EZ Street has eliminated the full and very expensive second stage of final asphalt surfacing.

This will also eliminate potholes appearing, causing problems and requiring repair in the time prior to the final asphalt repair.

There will always be arguments against this method. But EZ Street has the ability to refute them. In all cases EZ Street will still provide a cost benefit against the traditional method.

1. *Once the cold mix has been removed, we like to compact the trench prior to installing the asphalt.*

**This is pretty much an excuse for poor workmanship. Without fail, all government department specifications require specific compaction requirements when utility services are backfilled and brought to surfacing level. These specifications are designed to eliminate trench settlements and surface defects. If the work crew performed the job to the required specifications then this will never be an issue.**

2. *The trench always needs to have an asphalt finish for permanency.*

**EZ Street is high performance asphalt. EZ Street is a material that has a minimum of the same strengths, stabilities and benefits as regular asphalt. In most instances EZ Street outperforms asphalt. Removing EZ Street to install regular asphalt instead is the equivalent to using cold mix to replace asphalt.**

3. *What if the trench sinks or settles due to incomplete compaction.*

**As noted in point one, trench settlement is a sign of poor workmanship and surface reinstatement techniques should never have to compensate for poor workmanship on the backfill. That being said, EZ Street loves bonding to EZ Street. If the trench does settle, there is no need to cut out and rebuild the effected section. EZ Street can simply be placed directly on top of the existing EZ Street surface and it will bind cleanly to form one single deep layer.**



EZ Street is not subject to the normal “slabbing effect” commonly found when placing new asphalt to patch on top of existing asphalt.

4. *We need to be able to asphalt over the trench with a full road resurface.*

EZ Street is not subject to diluent leaching that can cause delamination of asphalt layers. There are no issues or detrimental effects to a new asphalt surface due to paving over EZ Street.

5. *I need to repair emergency water breaks in the depths of winter.*

EZ Street can be used in all temperatures and weather conditions. We have successful patch repairs that have installed when the outside temperature has been -30 °C. EZ Street works best when the material is at room temperature as this is when the product has its best “workability”. Storing EZ Street indoors or carrying bags inside the cab of trucks will always maintain the product at its best workability.

For a detailed report on cost benefits and savings utilising EZ Street versus the traditional method, please visit [www.ezstreetasphalt.ca/technical](http://www.ezstreetasphalt.ca/technical). This paper was put together for the City of Columbia, Tennessee. All information in the document is relevant for any utility service in North America

EZ Street is available in 1 tonne sacks, 22 kg bags, or pallets (56 bags per pallet) and bulk\* throughout Canada. For more information visit us online at [www.ezstreetasphalt.ca](http://www.ezstreetasphalt.ca) or call toll free 1-877-575-7023.

\*Available in bulk in some locations.