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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 22, 2014

Project Funded by Tax Dollars Uses Flawed Science and Pressure to Pursue Stated Goal of Phasing-out Certain Sealcoat Products Industry Challenges Use of Questionable Research

ALEXANDRIA, Virginia, Jan. 22, 2014 –EPA awarded a grant which established the Great Lakes Coal Tar Sealcoat PAH Reduction Project (“Project”). The stated goal of the Project was for the grantees to step in and convince the marketplace that refined tar-based pavement sealcoat (RTS) should be “voluntarily” phased-out and replaced with other products. There was no hearing, no solicitation of comments from industry, and no draft proposal. With the usual avenues for comment and interaction with government agencies thus closed, PavementCouncil.org submitted unsolicited comments to EPA Region 5, collaborating agencies and the public at large as part of an ongoing effort to provide a more balanced, accurate and scientifically supportable approach to the issues at hand. The letter was submitted [on January 21, 2014](#).

Currently, the Project is led by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, the University of Wisconsin-Extension Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center, the Great Lakes Regional Pollution Prevention Roundtable (which is affiliated with the University of Illinois), and the U.S. EPA Great Lakes Program Office. Over the past year, the Project has used a multimedia program to accomplish its goal of eliminating the use of RTS throughout the Midwest. In addition to the creation of a website which provides numerous links to articles and publications that support the phase-out of RTS, the Project has also engaged the marketplace with widespread email, direct mail and telephone campaigns to “educate” consumers, municipalities, contractors and other states about the alleged environmental, ecological and human hazards of RTS, and of the alleged need to transition to asphalt sealants. These efforts have culminated with Project participants, many of whom are cloaked with the appearance of governmental authority, pressuring contractors and consumers to sign statements in which they agree not to use RTS in the future. The results of these efforts are then posted on the Project website.

The campaign described above has been carried out without any reference to or citation of peer reviewed research that has called into question the very foundation of the conclusions offered by the Project. Thus, while using the language of “educating consumers and the public about RTS,” the Project actually is an example of unwarranted product deselection and advocacy conducted at

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taxpayer expense. The Project primarily relies upon chemical fingerprint modeling conducted by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) - modeling that has been shown to be flawed in identifying RTS as an important source of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the environment. PavementCouncil.org has challenged the USGS' findings by laying out the facts in Data Quality Act (DQA) filings, available [via this link](#); by funding research published in peer-reviewed science journals, available [via this link](#); and by directly informing government agencies and the public of the facts via presentations and comment letters such as that just provided to the Project, available [here](#).

Based on the current state-of-the-science, PavementCouncil.org recommends that the Project be shut down or, at the least, suspended. If organizations participating in the Project are unable or not permitted to discontinue the Project, the Project must provide accurate and balanced information rather than incomplete and flawed science.

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ABOUT PAVEMENTCOUNCIL.ORG

Members of [pavementcouncil.org](#) are manufacturers of pavement sealants and their suppliers. Also known as the Pavement Coatings Technology Council (PCTC), PavementCouncil.org is a not-for-profit trade association engaged in research, education, training and communications with the goal of improving the public's understanding of the pavement coatings business. Most of the companies involved in the pavement coatings industry are small and medium size businesses that generate well-paying jobs and support local economies. They are the types of businesses that are proud to be a part of your community.

If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview, please send an email to news@pavementcouncil.org. Additional background and other information are available at [pavementcouncil.org](#).



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