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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 30, 2013

## **White Hat Bias Documented in 3<sup>rd</sup> Data Quality Act Request for Correction Filed by PavementCouncil.org**

ALEXANDRIA, Virginia, Sept. 30, 2013 – On Sept. 18, PavementCouncil.org submitted its third Data Quality Act (DQA) challenge since May to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The third DQA Request for Correction (RfC) describes in detail the exaggerations and violations of as many risk assessment guidelines as was needed to make it appear that refined tar-based pavement sealers (RTS) are associated with elevated cancer risks. A team of USGS employees based in Austin, Texas has been leading a concerted nationwide advocacy campaign to ban the manufacture and use of RTS in what is believed to be a case of “White Hat Bias,” the first case to be described in environmental research. White Hat Bias is defined as “bias leading to distortion of information in the service of what may be perceived to be righteous ends,” and was first described in a case involving obesity research. White Hat Bias is conjectured to derive from “feelings of righteous zeal, indignation toward certain aspects of industry, or other factors.” PavementCouncil.org is filing a series of DQA challenges in part to document the scientific inaccuracies, exaggerations, misleading statements, unexplained omissions of data and absence of context in USGS publications about RTS. In the process, the submissions are documenting White Hat Bias within this Department of the Interior agency.

The USGS has indicated that the new risk assessment DQA challenge will be considered separately from the first two challenges. The USGS will post the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> DQA challenge on its web site, [here](#). Until then, the challenge can be viewed on the PavementCouncil.org web site, [here](#). The [first request](#), filed May 15, documents that USGS claims that RTS is a significant source of PAHs in urban sediment are inaccurate. [The second request](#), filed May 31, asks the USGS stop using misleading and inaccurate photographs in its advocacy materials. The USGS consolidated the first two requests and has extended the schedule for its response to mid-November.

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**ABOUT PAVEMENTCOUNCIL.ORG**

Members of [pavementcouncil.org](http://pavementcouncil.org) are manufacturers of pavement sealants and their suppliers. Also known as the Pavement Coatings Technology Council (PCTC), a not-for-profit trade association engaged in research, education, training and communications to improve understanding of the business of pavement coatings.

Most of the companies involved in the pavement coatings industry are small and medium size businesses – just the sort of businesses that are disadvantaged by the rush to regulation that seems to be in fashion with governments at all levels. [Pavementcouncil.org](http://Pavementcouncil.org) members are good corporate citizens, with well paid, often unionized work forces. Recently, [pavementcouncil.org](http://pavementcouncil.org) held a webinar for sealcoating contractors. Of the 265 industry participants who registered for the webinar, 47% were from companies with 10 or fewer employees. Another 32% were from companies with 11 to 35 employees. This reflects the industry, dominated by small to very small local businesses.

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



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