Without proper preparation, winter weather can cause permanent damage to pavement.

Snow may signal the coming of the holiday season, but it can also be the beginning of the end for a pristine driveway or parking lot. Concrete is naturally porous, so water from melting snow can sink in and collect under the pavement above the subbase. When this water freezes, it expands, pushing out on the pavement and causing swelling and subsequent cracks.

Fortunately, there are several ways to protect against these winter wear woes. Pavement Coatings Technology Council offers four easy tips so you can Be Informed. Seal Success. before winter is here.

START THE WINTER RIGHT.
Starting with well-protected and maintained pavement is key to keeping it intact throughout the winter. Hire professionals to clean pavement in the fall. They’ll spot any current cracks or potholes and have enough time to repair them before the winter hits, thus preventing further damage. They’ll also remove any debris from the pavement, which will make clearing away snow much easier later on.

USE A PROTECTIVE SEALANT EVERY TWO TO FIVE YEARS.
A sealant will add a protective layer over your concrete and help block ice and snow from sinking in. The optimal time to apply a sealcoat is when the temperature is around 50 degrees for proper curing, so plan accordingly!

USE PLASTIC SNOW SHOVELS, AND SHOVEL OFTEN.
The sharp edge of metal shovels can scratch concrete, so stick with a plastic ones. It’s also important to remove snow as soon as possible after it falls, rather than let it accumulate over multiple snowfalls. The longer you wait, the more time the snow has to melt, sink in, and re-freeze and start creating cracks.

REMOVE ALL STAINS.
Although sealants do an excellent job of preventing stains, if you do happen to have any stains on your pavement, be sure to remove them before the winter hits. The extra ice and water will only make them worse, leaving your pavement looking worse for wear in the spring.

Protecting your pavement from winter damage ultimately comes down to preparation. A solid foundation of protection saves your pavement from winter damage, which saves your wallet from spring repair costs. Always keep up with proper maintenance and use a sealcoat to ensure smooth pavement year round.

BE INFORMED. SEAL SUCCESS.

Find more of Pavement Coatings Technology Council’s tools at pavementcouncil.org