

TOWN OF POMFRET

February 2, 2017


Dear Environmental Committee members,

In small rural Connecticut towns the road maintenance budget is a significant percentage of the overall operational budget. Providing safe travel on our local roads is a primary function of the government. One method for constraining the costs is to adopt a robust preventive-based road maintenance program to extend the intervals between full reclamation. The Cornell Local Road Program center estimates life cycle costs savings of 70% if prevention based actions are performed before or as soon as problems emerge. The practice of applying road rejuvenators is key to this process.

Most if not all, asphalt materials used to build and maintain roads contain some carcinogenic material. A scan of safety data sheets confirms this. Yet we continue to use these materials. However, some road products may pose a greater health and environmental risk than others. Connecticut municipalities don't have the resources or expertise to make these determinations. It is properly the role of the State to research and provide specific guidance to municipalities on these matters.

In July 2016 the Town of Pomfret applied a rejuvenator containing coal-tar, a carcinogen, to the roads in a residential neighborhood. While sealcoats containing coal tar are banned in a few instances outside of Connecticut, they are still used widely. While it seems clear that the use of road rejuvenators is the wave of the future, the scientific evidence on these products is far from conclusive. I urge the state to perform the necessary research to evaluate the health and environmental risks and, if necessary, create legislation such as Bill 5884 directing a State ban on the use of sealcoats containing coal tar.

Thank you for your consideration.

Craig Baldwin

First Selectman

Town of Pomfret

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