Recycling Concrete and Asphalt Helps Build Sustainable Communities

Californians have long been committed to recycling. It’s second nature to us to recycle paper, plastic, glass, and cans on a daily basis. Metal, wood, used oil, and household hazardous waste are frequent recyclables, too.

But what happens to the concrete when that building down the street is torn down? And where do old roads go when you see asphalt pavement being pulled up?

Demolishing infrastructure to repair and replace roads and buildings generates large quantities of construction wastes. Many California sand and gravel operators help keep these materials out of landfills by annually crushing millions of tons of used concrete and asphalt pavement into “Construction Aggregates”.

These recycled aggregates are in great demand by contractors, cities, counties, park districts, and home owners for meeting our infrastructure needs, and for such uses as building new roads, parking lots, landscaping, drainage around underground pipe, erosion control, base materials for footings and foundations, and in new concrete and asphalt.

Cost Effective
• Saves contractors landfill fees and decreases disposal costs
• Occurs at local recycling operation or at the demolition site
• Cuts transportation costs due to proximity of recycling facilities
• Extends diminishing natural aggregate resources

Environmentally Effective
• Diverts waste from landfill
• Reduces the environmental effects of long-haul transportation
• Conserves petroleum products
• Reduces energy use

Municipally Effective
• Assists local municipalities and counties meet mandates to reduce waste disposal.
• Saves local government money and helps taxpayers
• Offers high quality and performance
• Creates new business opportunities and jobs
• Helps meet demand for new infrastructure

Demand for Aggregates Keeps Building
Recycled aggregates originate from demolished infrastructure. Yet it is estimated that if all concrete and asphalt rubble were recycled, it would be only 5% of what is needed in the construction industry.

A primary market for aggregates recycled from concrete is high quality road base.

100% of asphalt pavement is recyclable.

80% asphalt removed from roads is reused?

Asphalt recycling is comparable to can and bottle recycling:

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California sand & gravel operators recover, recycle, and reuse concrete and asphalt every day

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California Construction and Industrial Materials Association
1029 J Street, Ste. 420
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916 554-1000
Fax: 916 554-1042
www.calcima.org
www.distancematters.org