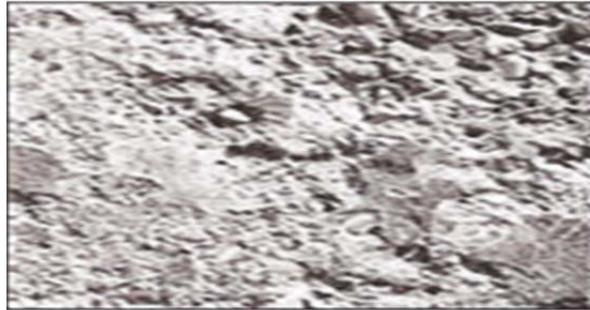


PROPERTY OWNER CONCRETE MAINTENANCE GUIDE

**Don't Let This Happen To You! Don't Use Salts or Deicers!!!!
Protect your Concrete Today.**



Stop in to talk to one of our experts today.

The City staff has had a long experience with concrete, and will help you understand how to preserve and protect the beauty of your new concrete. Please feel free to call us anytime at (541)962-1325 if you have questions about caring for your concrete.

Once your concrete driveway, patio, walkways or other project is completed, some simple care and maintenance measures will help assure you of a long life of beauty and service. The City of La Grande Public Works Department wants to share our knowledge of the care and maintenance of concrete with you. Once we're done, we'll help you understand how to care for the completed surface. It all starts as soon as the concrete crews and equipment are gone.

Concrete is an amazing material. Soft and easy to manipulate during installation, it soon sets into a solid, stone-like material. This process called setting and curing, doesn't happen instantly, however. While the concrete will become firm and hard fairly quickly, it remains relatively weak until completely cured, normally 28 days after placing, a process that can take quite some time, depending on temperature and other conditions. How you treat your new concrete will affect it for years to come.

Quick Tips

Although concrete is an extremely durable product, the following care and maintenance guidelines will add to the value of your investment:

- Do not apply deicing chemicals for snow and ice removal during the winter freezing periods. To provide traction, sand or kitty litter is recommended. Your concrete expert may have some additional products that will not harm your new concrete.
- Never apply deicers containing ammonium sulphate or ammonium nitrate. These products may be packaged and sold as deicers, but aggressively attack and deteriorate concrete surfaces.
- For stain removal, do not use harsh acids. Use a product specifically designed for the stain in question and for use on concrete.
- Keep concrete clear of snow and ice at all times.

(over)

Initial Care for Your New Concrete Driveway or Other Project

Before the concrete finishing crew leaves, they should give you instructions on how to care for your new driveway, sidewalk or other project over the next few days, and let you know when you'll be able to drive or park on it. The time required for concrete to fully cure is variable, so follow the timeline carefully. Typically, here's how it goes:

First Week - Immediately, you'll need to keep children, pets, and inquisitive neighbors off your new concrete for several hours, until it is set solid and the surface is hard. Even foot traffic can cause permanent marks on freshly finished concrete. For several days, you'll probably be asked to water the surface of the driveway one or more times a day. Concrete needs to stay moist to develop its full strength. You'll be able to walk on your concrete within 24 hours, but you should avoid putting anything heavy on the surface.

The Curing Period - After seven to ten days, your driveway will have cured adequately for you to drive vehicles on it. That time can vary, depending on the temperature. Follow the advice of concrete experts closely to avoid damaging your new concrete surface.

Continuing Care & Maintenance

The beauty of choosing a concrete driveway or sidewalk is how little maintenance and care it really needs. Cleaning your concrete periodically and keeping it sealed are the key components of any good maintenance program. How often you clean and reseal will largely depend on the conditions the concrete is exposed to, especially weather extremes, sunlight intensity and the amount of foot or vehicle traffic.

Avoid Salt and Deicers - Avoid putting salt or deicers on your driveway. They can cause scaling, crumbling and deterioration of the concrete. Using salt or deicers during the first winter after your concrete has been poured is especially harmful, but you should avoid using salt or deicers at any time on concrete. Use sand or kitty litter instead, or consider using another product recommended by the experts. Follow the instructions on the packaging carefully.

Control Plantings - Trees, bushes and other plants can cause problems if they are planted too close to your sidewalk or driveway. Roots can grow up through the cement, or even raise the concrete, cracking it and causing it to break off and crumble. Weeds may sprout in any cracks that develop, but can be treated with spot herbicides.

Clean Up Spills - Using a pressure washer to spray and clean the area immediately after spilling oil, gasoline, grease or other stains is the best bet for removing these types of stains. Act fast to prevent permanent staining.

Avoid Heavy Loads - Keep heavy trucks and equipment off your driveway. Although concrete is durable, residential driveways are not meant to support heavy vehicles and large equipment.

Snow Removal - Use care when plowing or shoveling your driveway or sidewalk. Lift the blade up so that the blade does not scrape or scar the concrete surface. Using snow blowers with rubber blades will also help avoid damage.

Apply Sealant - Seal concrete surfaces, as recommended by your contractor. You can do this job yourself, carefully following the instructions on the sealing product, since spread rates differ. If you prefer to have sealing done professionally, call us for a list of one of our professional business partners.