

A report from ISSA Expansion Committee Chairman & Past President Mike Buckingham, Strawser Inc.

## **CHANGE, CHANGE, CHANGE**

**I have to do to what?! If it's not broke, why fix it? I don't understand why we have to do that!**

These are frequent questions that I've had to ask myself over the past few months. Seems a lot of us are telling ourselves all the time...if it works, leave it alone. Some of us are now asking those questions about ISSA, a sacred group of slurry sealers and micro surfacers. Even we are being made to change. Real change! ISSA will no longer be a small family organization. We are being asked to accept new members and enlarge our scope to include, guess who? Chip sealers and crack sealers! Who would have thought this? Who could possibly imagine that ISSA would embrace those competitors? Who did? With guidance from a member survey, the 2007 ISSA Board of Directors did.

Realizing the landscape that pavement preservation has provided them, the Board of Directors decided it must take action and change to meet the needs of an ever changing world. The need for change has been created by the offspring of ISSA, the Foundation for Pavement Preservation. If you remember, sixteen years ago ISSA gave birth to the Foundation. Not unlike most kids, the Foundation stubbed its toe along the way, and made its parents really upset, all the while creating the "Pavement Preservation" movement. This child, the Foundation for Pavement Preservation, then joined hands with a partner and created the National Center for Pavement Preservation. Further recognizing and expanding with its partner and with the help of the Federal Highway Administration, "Pavement Preservation" evolved as the way of life for the future.

ISSA realized that it was only a part of Pavement Preservation. In order to more effectively play on the pavement preservation playground, it needed to become friends with some of the other players. ISSA realized it needed to embrace some of its former competitors in order to claim its position as the pavement preservation contractor organization it wanted to be. We all realize this, but don't want to accept it. The 2007 ISSA Board of Directors saw the playground and realized expansion of its team was vital to its position in the industry. An Expansion Committee was created; it plotted a course and created a plan. The Board took the ball, got out the playbook and started to execute its plays. At the 2008 annual convention in Mexico, the Board presented its case. ISSA President Don Kaiden was quoted as saying, "I was never any prouder of ISSA than I was that day at that business meeting." After some heated discussions, further explanations, and challenging moments, the general membership of ISSA overwhelmingly approved the bylaws changes necessary to effect the expansion. The ball is rolling, the plan is set in motion, and positive things are already happening.

My belief is that we have absolutely nailed this thing. Our timing is perfect. Pavement preservation is about to bust open and ISSA is encouraged to take advantage of the situation as the increasing need for pavement preservation surfaces. All types of pavement preservation are represented by ISSA: micro surfacing, slurry seals, chip seals, and crack treating. ISSA appears to be on the cutting edge of the Preservation movement. Our opportunities have never been so good. As an example, let's look at ISSA's upcoming participation at the 2009 World of Asphalt in Orlando in March. ISSA has been asked to provide six 1.5 hour instructional seminars. That's up from a few years ago when ISSA had to beg for a single session. We have all of a sudden evolved, expanded and grown into a large player. Both a chip seal and a crack treatment committee are in operation. Each has a lot to do to catch up to the maturity level of slurries and micros, but the work has begun. Those committees will be lead by new ISSA members or old members who have been doing that type of work for years.

As time goes on, there will be a need to change the name of ISSA to more accurately describe who we are and who we represent. That will all come in time. When the time is right, the Board

will again carry that ball and bring to the membership what needs to be done. What ISSA has done is build an opportunity. An opportunity for chip sealers and crack sealers to become part of something, something bigger, and work together with all of us slurry and micro guys. To become stronger, to become the organization that truly represents the preservation contracting world, and be the world leader that it always has been.

ISSA has again been the brave leader that has taken steps to become great. As we have heard before, build it and they will come. ISSA has provided that and will lead the way to put us all in a better place.