



## MDOT State Highway Administration

Asphalt Pavement Distress Repair Guidelines













Prepared by Geoff Hall, P.E., Pavement and Geotechnical Division Chief

## ➤ Use these guidelines in conjunction with:

- Section 505 Asphalt Patches
- Section 510 Sealing Cracks and Joints in Asphalt Pavements

- Standard No. MD 578.03 for patching flexible pavements (no concrete)
- ➤ <u>Standard No. MD-578.03-01</u> for patching composite pavements (concrete covered by asphalt)





### ➤ Organization

- This document is organized by pavement distress type. For each distress type, pictures of various severity levels are provided, along with instructions of whether to:
  - > Do Nothing,
  - Use crack seal,
  - > Use mastic, or
  - > Patch (Full or Partial-Depth).





In addition, <u>summary tables</u> are provided directing whether to use Crack Sealing, Mastic, and Patching for each distress and severity type.

#### ➤Notes:

- ▶ 1. Crack seal and mastic should be placed during the spring and fall.
- ➤ 2. Crack seal and mastic shall be placed at least 2 months before micro-surfacing is applied.
- ➤ 3. Patches that are NOT resurfaced within 3 months should be crack sealed.
- ➤ 4. Use crack seal for crack widths between 1/8" and 1". Use mastic for crack widths only between 1" and 3".
- > 5. Cracks do not need to be sealed for Superpave asphalt resurfacing projects.
- ➤ 6. For longitudinal patches, connect distressed areas that are less than 50' apart.
- > 7. Minimum patch size is generally 6' x 6' for projects where milling and/or overlay will follow.



- > 8. Generally, for situations where:
- a. Patching up to 3" in one lift: Minimum patch width shall be 2'.
- b. Patching on Primary Roads (Interstates, Principal Arterials): Minimum patch width shall be 6'.
- c. Patching on Secondary Roads (all other functional classes): Minimum patch width shall be 4'.
- > 9. For Patch-Only projects, the minimum length should be 6'.
- 10. If a distress exists on the mainline and spills over to the shoulder, the patch thickness shall be the thicker of the two pavement sections, unless the mainline and shoulder patching will be done in separate passes.
- > 11. In considering width, do not leave a relatively small sliver (perhaps 2') between the patch and an existing longitudinal joint. Avoid putting a joint in the wheelpath.
- ▶ 12. Additional information regarding crack sealing can be found in the <u>Pavement and Geotechnical</u> <u>Design Guide</u>.

### ➤ Commonly Seen Distress Types

- ▶1. <u>Alligator (Fatigue) Cracking</u>
- ▶ 2. <u>Edge Cracking</u>
- ▶3. Joint Reflection Cracking
- ▶ 4. Non-wheelpath Cracking
- ➤ 5. <u>Potholes/Failures</u>
- ▶ 6. Previously existing Patches

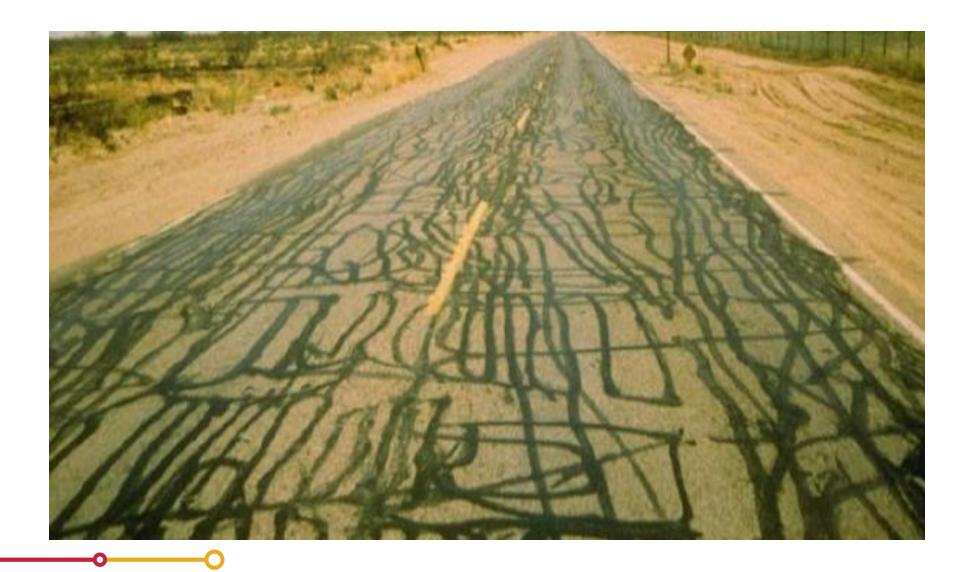
#### ► Less Common Distress Types:

- ▶1. <u>Bumps and Sags</u>
- ►2. Corrugation
- ►3. <u>Depressions</u>
- ▶4. Shoving
- ► 5. Slippage Cracking
- ►6. Swells

<u>Summary tables</u> to repair these are provided.



#### Example of what road **SHOULD NOT** look like after Crack Sealing





Summary Tables: Crack Sealing, Mastic, Patch

Crack Sealing	Severity		
Distress	Low	Medium	High
Alligator Cracking	No	No	No
Edge Cracking	Yes	Yes	No
Joint Reflection Cracking	Yes	Yes	No
Non-wheelpath Cracking	Yes	Yes	No
Potholes/Failures	No	No	No
Previously existing Patches	Yes	No	No
Bumps and Sags	No	No	No
<u>Corrugation</u>	No	No	No
<u>Depressions</u>	No	No	No
Shoving	No	No	No
Slippage Cracking	No	No	No
Swells	No	No	No

Mastic	Severity		
Distress	Low	Medium	High
Alligator Cracking	No	No	No
Edge Cracking	No	Yes	No
Joint Reflection Cracking	No	Yes	Yes
Non-wheelpath Cracking	No	Yes	Yes
Potholes/Failures	Yes	Yes	No
Previously existing Patches	No	No	No
Bumps and Sags	No	Yes	Yes
<u>Corrugation</u>	No	No	No
<u>Depressions</u>	No	Yes	Yes
<u>Shoving</u>	No	No	No
Slippage Cracking	No	No	No
<u>Swells</u>	No	No	No

Patch	Severity		
Distress	Low	Medium	High
Alligator Cracking	No	Yes	Yes
Edge Cracking	No	No	Yes
Joint Reflection Cracking	No	Yes	Yes
Non-wheelpath Cracking	No	No	Yes
Potholes/Failures	Yes	Yes	Yes
Previously existing Patches	No	Yes	Yes
Bumps and Sags	No	Yes	Yes
<u>Corrugation</u>	No	Yes	Yes
<u>Depressions</u>	No	Yes	Yes
Shoving	No	Yes	Yes
Slippage Cracking	No	Yes	Yes
<u>Swells</u>	No	Yes	Yes

Note: Go to specific distress pages for clarifications and exceptions.

## ➤ Alligator (Fatigue) Cracking

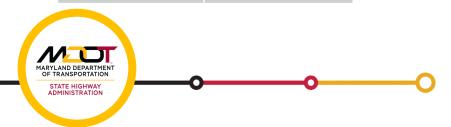
- Description: Structural cracking that when severe enough looks like an alligator's back. The pavement is not strong enough to support traffic loads.
- Typical Cause: Inadequate thickness, poor subgrade support, or debonding between asphalt layers.
- ➤ Typical Location: The wheelpaths.



## **Alligator Cracking: Low Severity**

Typically a meandering, longitudinal crack in the wheelpath. When this is consistently present in a pavement, it usually occurs because of debonding between the top one or two asphalt layers and the underlying base asphalt layer.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





## Alligator Cracking: Medium Severity Return to Repair Summary

**Typically** a series of occasionally interconnected cracks in a fairly tight pattern in the wheelpath. No pavement has spalled out, and there isn't much effect on ride quality.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





## Alligator Cracking: High Severity

**Typically** well-defined series of interconnected cracks in the wheelpath. Pavement pieces may have spalled out, and there is a noticeable effect on ride quality.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





## Alligator Cracking: Repair Guidelines Return to Repair Summary

Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal			
Mastic			
Patching (Travel Lanes) - asphalt thickness greater than 6"		Partial	Full
Patching (Travel Lanes) - asphalt thickness less than 6"		Full	Full
Patching (Shoulders)			Full
Notes	1	1, 2	2

#### **Notes:**

- Contact OMT-PAGD to investigate whether the surface has debonded from the base and whether cracking is limited to the surface; if so, remove surface rather than patch.
- 2. <u>Contact OMT-PAGD</u> for guidance on patch thickness. Matching existing pavement thickness may be structurally insufficient, leading to repeated failure. A thicker-phan-existing patch may be needed.

### **►**Edge Cracking

- Description: A structural distress near the outer edge of the pavement, in that the pavement is not strong enough to support traffic loads.
- ➤ Typical Cause: Inadequate thickness or subgrade support
- ➤ Typical Location: Pavement edge.



## **Edge Cracking: Low Severity**

**Typically** low to medium cracking with no breakup or raveling.

Crack Seal	Yes
Mastic	No
Patch	No





## **Edge Cracking: Medium Severity**

Typically medium cracks with some breakup and raveling.

Crack Seal	Yes
Mastic	Yes
Patch	No



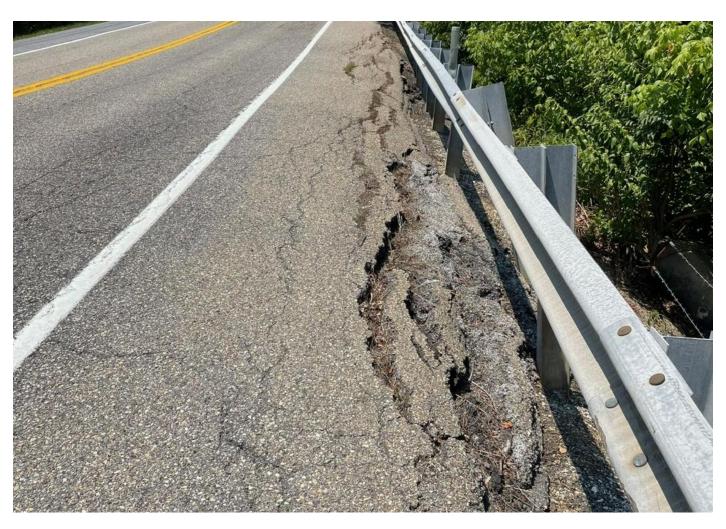


## **Edge Cracking: High Severity**

**Typically** considerable breakup or raveling along the edge.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





## Edge Cracking: Repair Guidelines

S. C.	Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal		Yes	Yes	
Mastic			Yes	
Patching - asphalt thickness greater than 6"				Partial
Patching - asphalt thickness less than 6"				Full
Notes				1

#### Notes:

 Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness. Matching existing pavement thickness may be structurally insufficient, leading to repeated failure. A thicker-than-existing patch may be needed.

## ➤ Joint Reflection Cracking

- Description: A functional distress, in that the cracks in the asphalt are caused by movement at the joints in underlying concrete slabs which reflects through to the surface.
- ➤ Typical Cause: Poor load transfer between concrete slabs. It can also be caused by shattered concrete slabs that were not previously patched, or it can be caused by previous patches constructed with full-depth asphalt.
- > Typical Location: Transverse, usually spaced every 30' to 40'. It can also be found longitudinally in locations where the original concrete roadway was later widened with full-depth asphalt.



# Joint Reflection Cracking: Low Severity

**Typically** a fairly straight, single transverse or longitudinal crack less than 3/8" wide, and above a concrete joint

Crack Seal	Yes
Mastic	No
Patch	No





# Joint Reflection Cracking: Medium Severity

**Typically** a fairly straight, transverse, or longitudinal crack between 3/8" and 3" wide, and above a concrete joint. This picture also has a bump associated with it.

Crack Seal	Yes
Mastic	Yes
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





Joint Reflection Cracking: High Severity

**Typically** a fairly straight, transverse, or longitudinal crack at least 3" wide, and above a concrete joint.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	Yes
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





Return to Distress Menu Return to Repair Summary

Joint Reflection Cracking:

**High Severity** 

**Typically** a fairly straight, transverse, or longitudinal crack at least 3" wide, and above a concrete joint.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





## Joint Reflection Cracking: Repair Guidelines

Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal	Yes	Yes	
Mastic		Yes	No/Yes
Patching – no noticeable bumps and will be resurfaced			Partial
Patching – patch only project and no noticeable bumps		Partial	Partial
Patching – noticeable bumps and asphalt is 2" to 3" thick		Full	Full
Patching – noticeable bumps and asphalt is 3" to 6" thick		Partial	Full
Patching – noticeable bumps and asphalt is more than 6" thick		Partial	Partial
Notes		1	1

1. Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness. It is critical that concrete be patched in kind with concrete, per the specifications. Failure to do so will result in a sinking of the asphalt patch, creating two joint reflection cracks.

## Non-wheelpath Cracking

- Transverse
- Longitudinal
- Block
- Construction Joints
- Diagonal

- **Description:** A functional distress, typically limited to the surface.
- Typical Cause: Environmental factors as asphalt ages and becomes increasingly brittle and less able to withstand heating and cooling cycles.

Cracks at construction joints are also put in this category since they are typically limited to the surface and are not load-related, but rather a function of inadequate compaction efforts during paving.

> Typical Location: Anywhere except longitudinally in the wheelpath.



Non-wheelpath Cracking:

**Low Severity** 

**Typically** any meandering crack or construction joint less than 3/8" wide that is NOT longitudinal in the wheelpath nor a joint reflection crack.

Crack Seal	Yes
Mastic	No
Patch	No





Non-wheelpath Cracking:

**Medium Severity** 

**Typically** any meandering crack or construction joint between 3/8" and 3" wide that is NOT longitudinal in the wheelpath nor a joint reflection crack.

Crack Seal	Yes
Mastic	Yes
Patch	No





Return to Repair Summary

# Non-wheelpath Cracking: High Severity

**Typically** any meandering crack or construction joint at least 3" wide that is NOT longitudinal in the wheelpath nor a joint reflection crack.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	Yes
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





Return to Repair Summary

# Non-wheelpath Cracking: Repair Guidelines

Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal	Yes	Yes	
Mastic		Yes	Yes
Patching			Partial
Notes			1

1. <u>Contact OMT-PAGD</u> for guidance on patch thickness.



### **▶**Potholes/Failures

- Description: A bowl-shaped depression, usually with sharp edges and vertical sides near the surface, where pavement has spalled out.
- Typical Cause: Water infiltrating cracks/joints, thereby weakening the subgrade and any delamination that has occurred, and when the water freezes, the expanding ice causes potholes
- >Typical Location: Anywhere.

## Potholes/Failures: Low Severity

**Typically** Less than 18" in diameter and up to 1" deep, or less than 8" in diameter and up to 2"

deep.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	Yes
Patch	See Repair Guidelines



## Potholes/Failures: Medium Severity

**Typically** 18" to 30" in diameter and up to 1" deep, or 8" to 18" in diameter and at least 1" deep, or less than 8" in diameter and more than 2" deep.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	Yes
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





## Potholes/Failures: High Severity

Typically at least 18" in diameter and at least 1" deep.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





## Potholes/Failures: Repair Guidelines Return to Repair Summary

Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal			
Mastic	Yes	Yes	
Patching	Partial	Partial	Full
Notes			1

Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness. Matching existing pavement thickness may be structurally insufficient, leading to repeated failure. A thicker-than-existing patch may be needed.

## **►**Existing Patches

- Description: An area of pavement that has been patched with new material, no matter how well it is performing.
- Typical Cause: A previous distress.
- >Typical Location: Anywhere.



## **Existing Patching: Low Severity**

**Typically** in good condition and satisfactory. Ride quality is good.

Crack Seal	Yes
Mastic	No
Patch	No





## **Existing Patching: Medium Severity**

**Typically** moderately deteriorated and/or mediocre ride quality.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





# **Existing Patching: High Severity**

**Typically** badly deteriorated and /or poor ride quality.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





#### Existing Patching: Repair Guidelines Return to Repair Summary

Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal if no resurfacing within 3 months or if to be resurfaced with 1" or thinner preventive maintenance	Yes		
Mastic			
Patching - asphalt thickness greater than 6"		Partial	Full
Patching - asphalt thickness less than 6"		Full	Full
Patching - Shoulders			Full
Notes			1

#### **Notes:**



Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness. Matching existing pavement thickness may be structurally insufficient, leading to repeated failure. A thicker-than-existing patch may be needed.

#### **▶**Bumps and Sags

- Description: Bumps are small, localized, upward displacements of the pavement surface. Sags are the opposite. They are both spaced more than 10 feet apart.
- ➤ Typical Cause: Buckling of underlying concrete, frost heave, or infiltration and buildup of material in a crack.
- ➤ Typical Location: Transverse locations.



#### **Bumps and Sags: Low Severity**

**Typically** causes fair ride quality.

Note: no picture available since it is difficult to see low severity bumps and sags in a picture. And, it wouldn't qualify for a repair.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	No



#### **Bumps and Sags: Medium Severity**

**Typically** causes mediocre ride quality.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	Yes
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





#### Bumps and Sags: High Severity

**Typically** causes poor ride quality.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	Yes
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





#### Bumps and Sags: Repair Guidelines

Return to Repair Summary

	Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal				
Mastic			Yes	Yes
Patching – if not milling			Partial	Full
Patching – if milling				Full
Patching - asphalt thickness greater than 6"				Partial
Patching - asphalt thickness less than 6"				Full
Notes			1,2	1

1. Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness.

2. Full-depth patching may be needed if the distress is significantly deep (more than half the total HMA thickness).

- **≻**Corrugation
- ►(aka Washboarding)

- ➤ **Description:** Looks like a washboard and is a series of closely spaced ridges and valleys.
- Typical Cause: Traffic action combined with unstable pavement material.
- ➤ Typical Location: Wheelpaths, approaching intersections.



#### Corrugation: Low Severity

**Typically** causes fair ride quality.

Note: no picture available since it is difficult to see low severity corrugation in a picture. And, it wouldn't qualify for a repair.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	No



#### Corrugation: Medium Severity

**Typically** causes mediocre ride quality.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





#### Corrugation: High Severity

**Typically** causes poor ride quality.

Picture pending...once we find a good example. If you see one, please send to Geoff Hall at <a href="mailto:ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov">ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov</a>.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines



Corrugation: Repair Guidelines

Return to Repair Summary

Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal			
Mastic			
Patching		Partial	Partial
Notes		1	1

 Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness. Full-depth patching may be needed if the distress is significantly deep (more than half the total HMA thickness).

#### **▶**Depressions

- Description: Localized pavement surface areas with elevations slightly lower than those of the surrounding pavement.
- Typical Cause: Settlement of foundation soil, improper compaction, or collapsed or failing pipes.
- ➤ Typical Location: Transverse locations.



#### **Depressions: Low Severity**

Typically 1/2" to 1" deep.

Note: no picture available since it is difficult to see low severity depressions in a picture. And, it wouldn't qualify for a repair.

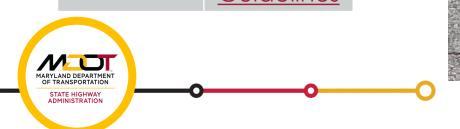
Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	No



### **Depressions: Medium Severity**

Typically 1" to 2" deep.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	Yes
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





# **Depressions: High Severity**

Typically more than 2" deep.

Crack Seal

Mastic

Patch



#### Depressions: Repair Guidelines

	Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal				
Mastic			Yes	Yes
Patching – if not milling			Partial	Full
Patching – if milling				Full
Patching - asphalt thickness greater than 6"				Partial
Patching - asphalt thickness less than 6"				Full
Notes			1,2	1

- 1. <u>Contact OMT-PAGD</u> for guidance on patch thickness.
- 2. Full-depth patching may be needed if the distress is significantly deep (more than half the total HMA thickness).

# >Shoving

- **Description:** A short, abrupt wave.
- Typical Cause: Traffic pushing against the pavement.
- Typical Location: Wheelpaths, where asphalt pavements abut concrete pavements.



### **Shoving: Low Severity**

**Typically** causes fair ride quality.

Note: no picture available since it is difficult to see low severity shoving in a picture. And, it wouldn't qualify for a repair.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	No



#### **Shoving: Medium Severity**

**Typically** causes mediocre ride quality.

Picture pending...once we find a good example. If you see one, please send to Geoff Hall at <a href="mailto:ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov">ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov</a>.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines



#### **Shoving: High Severity**

**Typically** causes poor ride quality.

Picture pending...once we find a good example. If you see one, please send to Geoff Hall at <a href="mailto:ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov">ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov</a>.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines



Return to Repair Summary

#### **Shoving: Repair Guidelines**

	Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal				
Mastic				
Patching			Partial	Partial
Notes			1	1

 Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness. Full-depth patching may be needed if the distress is significantly deep (more than half the total HMA thickness).

# Slippage Cracking

- ➤ **Description:** Crescent or halfmoon shaped cracks, typically limited to the surface.
- >Typical Cause: Debonding between the surface and underlying layers and produced by braking or turning wheels that cause the pavement surface to slide.
- >Typical Location: Wheelpaths.



#### Slippage Cracking: Low Severity

**Typically** average crack width is less than 3/8" wide.

Picture pending...once we find a good example. If you see one, please send to Geoff Hall at <a href="mailto:ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov">ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov</a>.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	No



## Slippage Cracking: Medium Severity

**Typically** average crack width is between 3/8" and 1.5" or the area around the crack is moderately spalled and/or surrounded with secondary cracks.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines



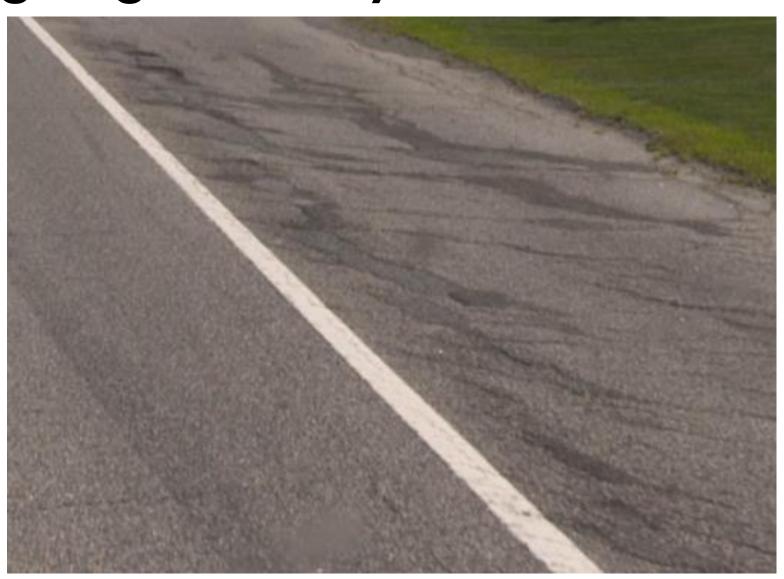


#### Slippage Cracking: High Severity

**Typically** average crack width is greater than 1.5" or the area around the crack is broken into easily removed pieces.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





Return to Repair Summary

Slippage Cracking: Repair Guidelines

S	everity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal				
Mastic				
Patching			Partial	Partial
Notes			1	1

 Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness. Full-depth patching may be needed if the distress is significantly deep (more than half the total HMA thickness).

#### >Swells

- Description: An upward bulge in the pavement's surface a long gradual wave more than 10' long.
- ➤ Typical Cause: Frost action or swelling soil.
- ➤ Typical Location: Transverse locations.



#### **Swells: Low Severity**

**Typically** causes fair ride quality.

Note: no picture available since it is difficult to see low severity swells in a picture. And, it wouldn't qualify for a repair.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	No



#### **Swells: Medium Severity**

**Typically** causes mediocre ride quality.

Picture pending...once we find a good example. If you see one, please send to Geoff Hall at <a href="mailto:ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov">ghall1@mdot.Maryland.gov</a>.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines



#### **Swells: High Severity**

**Typically** causes poor ride quality.

Crack Seal	No
Mastic	No
Patch	See Repair Guidelines





#### Swells: Repair Guidelines

	Severity	Low	Medium	High
Crack Seal				
Mastic				
Patching – if not milling			Partial	
Patching – if milling				
Patching - asphalt thickness greater than 6"				Partial
Patching - asphalt thickness less than 6"				Full
Notes			1,2	1

- 1. Contact OMT-PAGD for guidance on patch thickness.
- 2. Full-depth patching may be needed if the distress is significantly deep (more than half the total HMA thickness).

#### **PAGD Contacts**

- ➤ D1 and D5: Daniel Woldehanna at 443-572-5080 or <a href="mailto:dwoldehanna@mdot.maryland.gov">dwoldehanna@mdot.maryland.gov</a>
- ➤ D2 and D7: Jose Malheiro at 443-572-5173 or <a href="mailto:imalheiro@mdot.maryland.gov">imalheiro@mdot.maryland.gov</a>
- ➤ D3: (Vacant) Paulo DeSousa at 443-572-5061 or <u>pdesousa@mdot.maryland.gov</u>
- ➤ D4: Juan Patino Flores at 443-572-5059 or <u>JPatinoFlores1@mdot.maryland.gov</u>
- D6: Travis Vance at 443-572-5090 or <a href="mailto:tvance@mdot.maryland.gov">tvance@mdot.maryland.gov</a>