

DUNHAM'S ASPHALT SERVICES, INC.

Tulsa-area paving company provides everything from materials to full-service projects



Eddie Dunham,
President/CEO



Jeff Call,
Plant Manager/
Vice President

This Dunham's Asphalt Services crew paves a residential street in Tulsa with a LeeBoy 8510 paver. "LeeBoy pavers have been in my fleet for a long time," said President/CEO Eddie Dunham.

Few people can claim to have bought a piece of machinery to run a business around the same time they were getting their driver's license. That's just what Eddie Dunham, President and CEO of Sapulpa, Oklahoma-based Dunham's Asphalt Services, did.

While still in junior high in the late 1970s, Dunham began working with his older brother striping parking lots. By the time he was 16, he bought out his brother, purchased his own striping machine and began working solo.

"As time went on, customers asked if I could do other work, so I added on to accommodate them," said Dunham. "That led to crack sealing and seal coating and pothole repair. Business continued to increase."

In the early 1990s, Dunham purchased his first asphalt power box, tractor and roller to add paving to the mix. "They were used pieces and they weren't pretty by any stretch of the imagination," recalled Dunham. "In fact, everyone joked that we had to be done using the equipment by 6 o'clock every night so that we

could get it back to the museum before it closed. But, we made it work and customers were satisfied with our quality."

That helped Dunham's Asphalt Services expand. Eventually, it added new paving equipment, hired more employees and bought trucks. Today, paving makes up the bulk of Dunham's business. The company specializes in commercial work, such as parking lots, but also paves residential driveways, county roads and streets.

"We work as both a subcontractor and a general contractor," said Dunham. "Paving is our niche, but we also do milling. If customers want soil stabilization, concrete work and rock, we'll sub it out to trusted companies. We also sub out seal coating, patching and other smaller items. That model has served us well for a very long time and earned us a solid reputation for customer satisfaction."

Own supplier with plant

Dunham's project area covers about a 60-mile radius of Sapulpa that includes the Tulsa metro area and suburbs such as Sand Springs, where the company set up its own asphalt plant nearly a decade ago. Dunham considered the move for several years and "recruited" industry veteran Jeff Call to help make it happen. Call is now Plant Manager and Vice President.

"Having our own plant ensures we have control of the quantity and quality of materials we use," said Call. "That wasn't always the case when Eddie started talking to me about starting his own plant. We believe that control, along with a dedication to our craft, gives us an edge in the markets we serve."

The plant produces several materials, including what Call labels "basic, generic grocery store mixes." One of its main products is

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Dunham's Asphalt Services uses a Vögele Vision 5200-2i for mainline and other larger paving projects. "We were asked to pave the race track at Hallett (Motor Racing Circuit) in Jennings, Oklahoma, and I thought we needed a bigger paver," said Plant Manager/Vice President Jeff Call. "We demo'd the Vögele, and really liked the operation and how good the mat was. It's a great mainline paver with a 10-foot screed that will stretch out to about 20 feet."

Quality Pavement Repair's self-titled cold mix, QPR[®], which is used to patch small areas such as potholes because it doesn't require tack oil or any other preparation before use. QPR[®] is generally available in bags at big-box hardware stores. Quality Pavement Repair oversees the production and Dunham's Asphalt keeps it on hand in bulk.

"It's easy to use and provides a good fix until a more permanent repair can be made," said Call. "We're working on offering it in bag form, too. In addition to that and traditional types of products, we can make about any specialty mix that customers need. We have our own on-site testing lab to ensure quality control, and everything we make is DOT-approved."

A portion of nearly every product is made up of recycled materials. Recently, Dunham's Asphalt Services began using recycled asphalt shingles in its mixes.

"Over the years, the industry has found that ground-up shingles provide a good source of liquid asphalt. Through trial and error, we believe we've found the best way to use it in our mixes," said Call. "Shingles have traditionally been a large source of landfill waste, so recycling them back into new asphalt has a positive environmental impact."

Dedicated staff makes a difference

The plant's biggest customer is Dunham's Asphalt Services itself, although it does supply

counties, municipalities and other paving contractors. The company's paving side usually has 20-25 jobs on the books at a time and runs two crews.

"We work practically year-round with little-to-no downtime," said Dunham. "Fortunately, we have a very dedicated and experienced group of people who are willing to do whatever is needed in order to get jobs done on schedule. Most of them have been here a decade or more.

"It goes beyond the employees in the field," he added. "We have a terrific group of estimators and general office staff. Everyone plays a vital role in our success, and we couldn't be more proud of them."

Productive paving products

Dunham also ensures the company has quality equipment, including a Vögele Vision 5200-2i paver for larger jobs, and LeeBoy 8510 models for smaller projects such as residential driveways and streets.

"I look for machines that are productive, won't cost us in downtime and are easy to operate," said Dunham. "LeeBoy pavers have been in my fleet for a long time for that reason. They are small and powerful at the same time, allowing us to pave from 8 to 15 feet. We can load a spread – a paver, two small rollers and a skid steer – onto our haul truck, drop it off at a project, and begin paving almost instantly. They are terrific for day-in-and-day-out use. We've put down hundreds of thousands of tons of asphalt with LeeBoys over the years."



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Dunham's not afraid of hard work, challenging jobs

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(L-R) Kirby-Smith Machinery Territory Manager Peyton Chatham meets with Dunham's Asphalt Services President/CEO Eddie Dunham and Plant Manager/Vice President Jeff Call at the company's asphalt plant in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. "Peyton and Kirby-Smith are right there to help with answers to technical questions or service-related items," said Dunham. "We have developed a good relationship over the years, and that's another reason we continue to turn to Kirby-Smith for our equipment needs."



Dunham's Asphalt Services added the Vögele paver about a year ago. "We were asked to pave the race track at Hallett (Motor Racing Circuit) in Jennings, Oklahoma, and I thought we needed a bigger paver," said Call. "Kirby-Smith arranged a demo, and we really liked the operation and how good the mat was. It's a great mainline paver with a 10-foot screed that will stretch out to about 20 feet."

For compaction, Dunham's Asphalt Services uses Hamm vibratory double drum rollers. "A parking lot is no different than a road; you have to make sure each is correctly compacted," said Call. "Hamm rollers have a nice, thick drum and they're powerful, so they get the job done. What really sets them apart is the oscillation during vibration, which we believe provides superior density compared to other rollers."

Dunham's Asphalt Services works with Kirby-Smith Machinery, Inc. Territory Manager Peyton Chatham to purchase and rent equipment, including LeeBoy tack tanks, Multiquip plate compactors, a Trail King trailer and a Komatsu excavator. It turns to Kirby-Smith's Tulsa branch for support as needed.

"We do a lot of our own maintenance, but any time we need something, Peyton and Kirby-Smith are right there to help with answers to technical questions or service-related items," said Dunham. "We have developed a good relationship over the years, and that's another reason we continue to turn to Kirby-Smith for our equipment needs."

Growth plans

Dunham and Call are planning for future growth. The next step is to move the company's office to the same location as its plant, so the entire operation is together.

"We believe that would further streamline things for us and increase our efficiency," said Dunham. "Business has increased every year, and we see that trend continuing. One reason is that we focus on giving customers excellent service that goes above and beyond what they expect. Another is that we're not afraid of hard work or challenging jobs. Those things have carried us this far, and if we keep focusing on them, the future will be as bright as the past has been." ■

Dunham's Asphalt Services uses Hamm rollers for compaction. "Hamm rollers have a nice, thick drum and they're powerful, so they get the job done," said Plant Manager/Vice President Jeff Call. "What really sets them apart is the oscillation during vibration, which we believe provides superior density compared to other rollers."



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