

## Coal Tar Sealant: Harmful to the Environment & Human Health

**What is coal tar sealant?** Coal tar sealant is a substance that is applied to asphalt to seal the surface and prevent damage from everyday wear and tear.

**What are the dangers of using coal tar sealant?** Coal Hydrocarbons (PAHs). These harmful compounds have Michigan, after stormwater runoff polluted with these mixed with the freshwater.

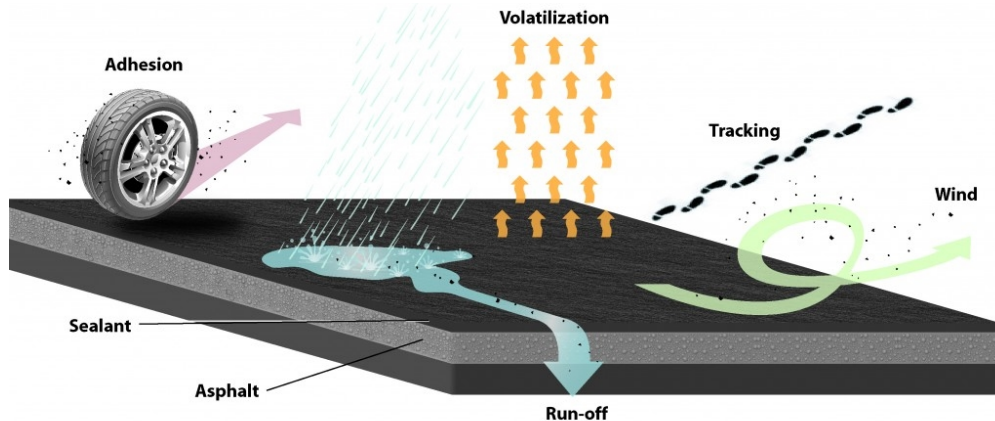
Coal tar sealant is also a known toxin to some species of fish and macroinvertebrates. Some species of fish exposed to coal tar sealant were found with developmental disabilities.



**How does coal tar sealant containing PAH's get into the environment?** Coal tar sealant sediments and particles can be spread in many ways. Coal Tar enters local freshwater ecosystems through stormwater runoff entering our storm drains. In warm weather, toxic PAH particles are released from the sealant into the air we breathe. Particles can also be blown into the air by the wind, tracked indoors on the bottoms of shoes, and also stick to the bottoms of tires on cars and carried as we drive.

### What can you do?

- Do not use Coal Tar Sealant whenever possible.
- Seek alternatives such as asphalt based materials which contain lower concentrations of PAHs.
- Be proactive when talking about coal tar as an environmental and human health issue. The banning of coal tar is gaining traction around the state.



Original graphic courtesy of Aaron Hicks, City of Austin, Tex.