

**SECTION 320  
HOT MIX ASPHALT -  
PLANT METHODS AND EQUIPMENT**

**320-1 General.**

This Section specifies the basic equipment and operational requirements for hot mix asphalt (including warm mix asphalt) production facilities used in the construction of asphalt pavements and bases. Establish and maintain a quality control system that provides assurance that all materials and products submitted for acceptance meet Contract requirements.

**320-2 Quality Control (QC) Requirements.**

**320-2.1 Minimum Producer QC Requirements:** Perform as a minimum the following activities:

1. Stockpiles:
  - a. Assure materials are placed in the correct stockpile;
  - b. Assure good stockpiling techniques;
  - c. Inspect stockpiles for separation, contamination, segregation, and other similar items;
  - d. Properly identify and label each stockpile.
2. Incoming Aggregate:
  - a. Obtain gradations and bulk specific gravity ( $G_{sb}$ ) values from aggregate supplier for reference;
  - b. Determine the gradation of all component materials and routinely compare gradations and  $G_{sb}$  values to mix design.
3. Cold Bins:
  - a. Calibrate the cold gate/feeder belt for each material;
  - b. Determine cold gate/feeder belt settings;
  - c. Observe operation of cold feeder for uniformity;
  - d. Verify accuracy of all settings;
  - e. Verify that the correct components are being used, and that all modifiers or additives or both are being incorporated into the mix.
4. Batch Plants:
  - a. Determine percent used and weight to be pulled from each bin to assure compliance with the mix design;
  - b. Check mixing time;
  - c. Check operations of weigh bucket and scales.
5. Drum Mixer Plants:
  - a. Determine aggregate moisture content;
  - b. Calibrate the weigh bridge on the charging conveyor.
6. Control Charts: Maintain QC data and charts (updated daily) for all QC Sampling and Testing and make available upon demand. Provide the following charts:
  - a. All components used to determine the composite pay factor (No. 8 sieve, No. 200 sieve, asphalt binder content, air voids, and density);
  - b. Gradation of incoming aggregate;
  - c. Gradation, asphalt binder content and maximum specific gravity ( $G_{mm}$ ) of RAP;

d. Any other test result or material characteristic (as determined by the Contractor) necessary for process control.

The above listed minimum activities are to be considered normal activities necessary to control the production of hot mix asphalt at an acceptable quality level. Depending on the type of process or materials, some of the activities listed may not be necessary and in other cases, additional activities may be required. The frequency of these activities will also vary with the process and the materials. When the process varies from the defined process average and variability targets, the frequency of these activities will be increased until the proper conditions have been restored.

**320-2.2 Minimum Process Control Testing Requirements:** Perform, as a minimum, the following activities at the testing frequencies provided in Table 320-1. QC tests used in the acceptance decision may be used to fulfill these requirements.

Table 320-1		
Asphalt Plant - Materials Testing Frequencies		
Material	Property	Minimum Testing Frequency
Aggregate	Gradation	Once per 1,000 tons of incoming aggregate
Asphalt Mix	Asphalt Binder Content	If daily production > 100 tons, once per day; If daily production > 1,000 tons, twice per day. *
Asphalt Mix	Bulk Specific Gravity ( $G_{mb}$ )	If daily production > 100 tons, once per day; If daily production > 1,000 tons, twice per day. *
Asphalt Mix	Gradation	If daily production > 100 tons, once per day; If daily production > 1,000 tons, twice per day. *
Asphalt Mix	Maximum Specific Gravity ( $G_{mm}$ )	If daily production > 100 tons, once per day; If daily production > 1,000 tons, twice per day. *
Asphalt Mix	Temperature	Each of first 5 loads, then once every 5 loads thereafter, per day per mix design.
RAP	Asphalt Binder Content	Once per 1,000 tons RAP
RAP	Gradation	Once per 1,000 tons RAP
RAP	Maximum Specific Gravity ( $G_{mm}$ )	Once per 5,000 tons RAP

\*If less than 100 tons of mix is produced on each of successive days of production, resulting in a cumulative quantity of greater than 100 tons, then perform the indicated test.

**320-2.3 Personnel Qualifications:** Provide QC Technicians in accordance with Section 105.

**320-2.4 Hot Mix Asphalt Testing Laboratory Requirements:** Furnish a fully equipped asphalt laboratory at the production site. The laboratory must be qualified under the Department's Laboratory Qualification Program, as described in Section 105. In addition, the laboratory shall meet the following requirements:

1. Area - The effective working area of the laboratory shall be a minimum of 180 square feet, with a layout of which will facilitate multiple tests being run simultaneously by two technicians. This area does not include the space for desks, chairs and file cabinets. Any variations shall be approved by the Engineer.

2. Lighting - The lighting in the lab must be adequate to illuminate all areas of the work.

3. Temperature Control - Equip the lab with heating and air conditioning units that provide a satisfactory working environment.

4. Ventilation - Equip the lab with exhaust fans that will remove all hazardous fumes from within the laboratory in accordance with OSHA requirements.

5. Equipment and Supplies - Furnish the lab with the necessary sampling and testing equipment and supplies for performing contractor QC and Department Verification Sampling and Testing. A detailed list of equipment and supplies required for each test is included in the appropriate FDOT, AASHTO, or ASTM Test Method. In the event testing equipment goes out of service during production, the Contractor may elect to use replacement equipment at another laboratory qualified, as described in Section 105, for up to 72 hours upon notification of the Engineer.

6. Personal Computer - Provide a personal computer capable of running a Microsoft Excel™ spreadsheet program, along with a printer.

7. Communication - Provide a telephone and fax machine (with a private line) for the use of the testing facility's QC personnel. In addition, provide an internet connection capable of uploading data to the Department's database and for e-mail communications.

### **320-3 Requirements for All Plants.**

**320-3.1 General:** Design, manufacture, coordinate, and operate the asphalt plant in a manner that will consistently produce a mixture within the required tolerances and temperatures specified.

**320-3.2 Electronic Weigh Systems:** Equip the asphalt plant with an electronic weigh system that: 1) has an automatic printout, 2) is certified every six months by an approved certified scale technician, and 3) meets monthly comparison checks with certified truck scales as specified in 320-3.2.4. Weigh all plant produced hot mix asphalt on the electronic weigh system, regardless of the method of measurement for payment.

Include, as a minimum, the following information on the printed delivery ticket:

- (a) Sequential load number
- (b) Project number
- (c) Date
- (d) Name and location of plant
- (e) Mix design number
- (f) Place for hand-recording mix temperature
- (g) Truck number
- (h) Gross, tare, and net tonnage per truck (as applicable)
- (i) Daily total tonnage of mix for the mix design

Print the delivery ticket with an original and at least one copy. Furnish the original to the Engineer at the plant and one copy to the Engineer at the paving site.

Utilize any one of the following three electronic weigh systems.

**320-3.2.1 Electronic Weigh System on the Truck Scales:** Provide an electronic weigh system on all truck scales, which is equipped with an automatic recordation system that is

approved by the Engineer. Use scales of the type that directly indicate the total weight of the loaded truck. Use scales meeting the requirements for accuracy, condition, etc., of the Bureau of Weights and Measures of the Florida Department of Agriculture, and re-certify such fact every six months, either by the Bureau of Weights and Measures or by a registered scale technician.

**320-3.2.2 Electronic Weigh System on Hoppers Beneath a Surge or Storage**

**Bin:** Provide an electronic weigh system on the hopper (hopper scales or load cells) beneath the surge or storage bin, which is equipped with an automatic recordation system approved by the Engineer.

**320-3.2.3 Automatic Batch Plants with Printout:** For batch plants, provide an approved automatic printer system which will print the individual or cumulative weights of aggregate and liquid asphalt delivered to the pugmill and the total net weight of the asphalt mix measured by hopper scales or load cell type scales. Use the automatic printer system only in conjunction with automatic batching and mixing control systems that have been approved by the Engineer.

**320-3.2.4 Monthly Electronic Weigh System Comparison Checks:** Check the accuracy of the electronic weighing system at the commencement of production and thereafter at least every 30 days during production by one of the following two methods and maintain a record of the weights in the Scale Check Worksheet.

**320-3.2.4.1. Electronic Weigh System on Truck Scales:**

(a) The Engineer will randomly select a loaded truck of asphalt mix, a loaded aggregate haul truck, or another vehicle type approved by the Engineer and record the truck number and gross weight from the Contractor's delivery ticket.

(b) Weigh the selected truck on a certified truck scale, which is not owned by the Contractor and record the gross weight for the comparison check. If another certified truck scale is not available, the Engineer may permit another set of certified truck scales owned by the Contractor to be used. The Engineer may elect to witness the scale check.

(c) The gross weight of the loaded truck as shown on the Contractor's delivery ticket will be compared to the gross weight of the loaded truck from the other certified truck scale. The maximum permissible deviation is 8 pounds per ton of load, based on the certified truck scale weight.

(d) If the distance from the asphalt plant to the nearest certified truck scale is enough for fuel consumption to affect the accuracy of the comparison checks, a fuel adjustment may be calculated by using the truck odometer readings for the distance measurement, and 6.1 miles per gallon for the fuel consumption rate, and 115 ounces per gallon for fuel weight.

(e) During production, when an additional certified truck scale is not available for comparison checks, the Engineer may permit the Contractor to weigh the truck on his certified scales used during production and then weigh it on another certified truck scale, as soon the other scale is available for the comparison checks.

In addition to the periodic checks as specified above, check the scales at any time the accuracy of the scales becomes questionable. When such inaccuracy does not appear to be sufficient to seriously affect the weighing operations, the Engineer will allow a period of two calendar days for the Contractor to conduct the required scale check. However, in the event the indicated inaccuracy is sufficient to seriously affect the mixture, the Engineer may require immediate shut-down until the accuracy of the scales has been checked and necessary

corrections have been made. Include the cost of all scale checks in the bid price for asphalt concrete, at no additional cost to the Department.

**320-3.2.4.2. Electronic Weigh System on Hoppers Beneath a Surge or Storage Bin and Automatic Batch Plants with Printout:**

(a) The Engineer will randomly select a loaded truck of asphalt mix and record the truck number, and the net weight of the asphalt mix from the Contractor's delivery ticket.

(b) Weigh the selected truck on a certified truck scale, which is not owned by the Contractor and record the gross weight for the comparison check. If another certified truck scale is not available, the Engineer may permit another set of certified truck scales owned by the Contractor to be used. The Engineer may elect to witness the scale check.

(c) Deliver the asphalt mix to the project, then weigh the selected empty truck on the same certified truck scales. Record the tare weight of the truck.

(d) Compare the net weight of the asphalt mix from the delivery ticket to the calculated net weight of the asphalt mix as determined by the certified truck scale weights. The maximum permissible deviation is 8 pounds per ton of load, based on the certified truck scale weight.

(e) Use the fuel adjustment as specified in 320-3.2.4.1(d), when the distance from the asphalt plant to the nearest certified truck scale is enough for fuel consumption to affect the accuracy of the comparison checks.

(f) During production, when an additional certified truck scale is not available for comparison checks, the Engineer may permit the Contractor to load a truck with aggregate from the pugmill, surge or storage bin, and follow the above procedures to conduct the comparison checks as soon as certified truck scale is available.

If the check shows a greater difference than the tolerance specified above, then recheck on a second set of certified scales. If the check and recheck indicate that the printed weight is out of tolerance, have a certified scale technician check the electronic weigh system and certify the accuracy of the printer. While the system is out of tolerance and before its adjustment, the Engineer may allow the Contractor to continue production only if provisions are made to use a set of certified truck scales to determine the truck weights.

**320-3.3 Asphalt Binder:** Meet the following requirements:

**320-3.3.1 Transportation:** Deliver the asphalt binder to the asphalt plant at a temperature not to exceed 370°F, and equip the transport tanks with sampling and temperature sensing devices meeting the requirements of 300-3.2.

**320-3.3.2 Storage:** Equip asphalt binder storage tanks to heat the liquid asphalt binder to the temperatures required for the various mixtures. Heat the material in such a manner that no flame comes in contact with the binder. Heat or insulate all pipe lines and fittings. Use a circulating system of adequate size to ensure proper and continuous circulation during the entire operating period. Locate a thermometer, reading from 200 to 400°F, either in the storage tank or in the asphalt binder feed line. Maintain the asphalt binder in storage within a range of 230 to 370°F in advance of mixing operations. Locate a sampling device on the discharge piping exiting the storage tank or at a location as approved by the Engineer.

**320-3.4 Aggregate:** Meet the following requirements:

**320-3.4.1 Stockpiles:** Place each aggregate component in an individual stockpile, and separate each from the adjacent stockpiles, either by space or by a system of bulkheads.

Prevent the intermingling of different materials in stockpiles at all times. Identify each stockpile, including RAP, as shown on the mix design.

Form and maintain stockpiles in a manner that will prevent segregation. If a stockpile is determined to be segregated, discontinue the use of the material on the project until the appropriate actions have been taken to correct the problem.

**320-3.4.2 Blending of Aggregates:** Stockpile all aggregates prior to blending or placing in the cold feed bins. If mineral filler or hydrated lime is required in the mix, feed or weigh it in separately from the other aggregates.

**320-3.4.2.1 Cold Feed Bin:** Provide a separate cold feed bin for each component of the fine and coarse aggregate required by the mix design. Equip the cold feed bins with accurate mechanical means for feeding the aggregate uniformly into the dryer in the proportions required for the finished mix to maintain uniform production and temperature. When using RAP as a component material, prevent any oversized RAP from being incorporated into the completed mixture by the use of: a grizzly or grid over the RAP bin; in-line roller or impact crusher; screen; or other suitable means. If oversized RAP material appears in the completed recycled mix, take the appropriate corrective action immediately. If the appropriate corrective actions are not immediately taken, stop plant operations.

Use separate bin compartments in the cold aggregate feeder that are constructed to prevent any spilling or leakage of aggregate from one cold feed bin to another. Ensure that each cold feed bin compartment has the capacity and design to permit a uniform flow of aggregates. Mount all cold feed bin compartments over a feeder of uniform speed, which will deliver the specified proportions of the separate aggregates to the drier at all times. If necessary, equip the cold feed bins with vibrators to ensure a uniform flow of the aggregates at all times.

**320-3.4.2.2 Gates and Feeder Belts:** Provide each cold feed bin compartment with a gate and feeder belt, both of which are adjustable to assure the aggregate is proportioned to meet the requirements of the mix design.

**320-3.4.3 Screening Unit:** Remove any oversized pieces of aggregate by the use of a scalping screen. Do not return this oversized material to the stockpile for reuse unless it has been crushed and reprocessed into sizes that will pass the scalping screen. Ensure that the quantity of aggregates being discharged onto the screens does not exceed the capacity of the screens to actually separate the aggregates into the required sizes.

**320-3.5 Dryer:** Provide a dryer of satisfactory design for heating and drying the aggregate. Use a dryer capable of heating the aggregate to within the specified temperature range for any mix, and equip the dryer with an electric pyrometer placed at the discharge chute to automatically register the temperature of the heated aggregates.

**320-3.6 Asphalt Binder Control Unit:** Provide a satisfactory means, either by weighing, metering, or volumetric measuring, to obtain the proper amount of asphalt binder material in the mix, within the tolerance specified for the mix design.

**320-3.7 Contractor's Responsibilities:** Acceptance of any automatic delivery ticket printout, electronic weight delivery ticket, other evidence of weight of the materials or approval of any particular type of material or production method will not constitute agreement by the Department that such matters are in accordance with the Contract Documents and it shall be the Contractor's responsibility to ensure that the materials delivered to the project are in accordance with the Contract Documents.

### **320-4 Additional Requirements for Batch Plants.**

**320-4.1 Heating and Drying:** Heat and dry the aggregate before screening. Control the temperature of the aggregate so the temperature of the completed mixture at the plant falls within the permissible range allowed by this Section.

**320-4.2 Gradation Unit:** Provide plant screens capable of separating the fine and coarse aggregates and of further separating the coarse aggregate into specific sizes. In addition, equip the gradation unit with a scalping screen to restrict the maximum size of the aggregates. In the event that the plant is equipped with cold feed bins that are capable of adequately controlling the gradation of the mixture, the use of plant screens is optional.

**320-4.3 Hot Bins:** Provide storage bins of sufficient capacity to supply the mixer when it is operating at full capacity. Provide hot bins with divided compartments to ensure separate and adequate storage of the appropriate fractions of the aggregate. Equip each compartment with an overflow chute of suitable size and location to prevent any backing up of material into other bins.

**320-4.4 Weigh Box or Hopper:** Equip the batch plant with a means for accurately weighing each bin size of aggregate and the mineral filler into the weigh box or hopper.

**320-4.5 Pugmills:** Utilize a pugmill capable of mixing the aggregate and the asphalt binder.

### **320-5 Additional Requirements for Drum Mixer Plants.**

**320-5.1 Weight Measurements of Aggregate:** Equip the plant with a weigh-in-motion scale capable of measuring the quantity of aggregate (and RAP) entering the dryer.

**320-5.2 Synchronization of Aggregate Feed and Asphalt Binder Feed:** Couple the asphalt binder feed control with the total aggregate weight device, including the RAP feed, in such a manner as to automatically vary the asphalt binder feed rate as necessary to maintain the required proportions.

**320-5.3 Hot Storage or Surge Bins:** Equip the plant with either a surge bin or storage silo that is capable of storing an adequate amount of material to assure a uniform and consistent product.

### **320-6 Preparation of the Mixture.**

**320-6.1 Mixing:** After the aggregate is dried and properly proportioned, mix the aggregate, along with any other components, with the asphalt binder to produce a thoroughly and uniformly coated mixture.

**320-6.2 Storage:** If necessary, store the asphalt mixture in a surge bin or hot storage silo for a maximum of 72 hours. For FC-5 mixtures, store the asphalt mixture in a surge bin or hot storage silo for a maximum of one hour.

**320-6.3 Mix Temperature:** Produce the mixture with a temperature within the master range as defined in Table 320-2.

**320-6.3.1 Test Requirements:** Determine the temperature of the completed mixture using a quick-reading thermometer through a hole in the side of the loaded truck immediately after loading. Locate a 1/4 inch hole on both sides of the truck body within the middle third of the length of the body, and at a distance from 6 to 10 inches above the surface supporting the mixture. If a truck body already has a hole located in the general vicinity of the specified location, use this hole. At the Engineer's discretion, the Contractor may take the temperature of the load over the top of the truck in lieu of using the hole in the side of the truck.

**320-6.3.2 Test Frequency:** The normal frequency for taking asphalt mix temperatures will be for each day, for each design mix on the first five loads and one out of every

five loads thereafter. Take the temperature of the asphalt mix at the plant and at the roadway before the mix is placed at the normal frequency. Record the temperature on the front of the respective delivery ticket. The Engineer shall review the plant and roadway temperature readings and may take additional temperature measurements at any time.

If any single load at the plant or at the roadway is within the master range shown in Table 320-2 but does not meet the criteria shown in Table 320-3 (for single measurements or the average of five consecutive measurements), the temperature of every load will be monitored until the temperature falls within the specified tolerance range in Table 320-3; at this time the normal frequency may be resumed. For warm mix asphalt, the Contractor may produce the first five loads of the production day *and at other times when approved by the Engineer*, at a hot mix asphalt temperature not to exceed 330°F for purposes of heating the asphalt paver. For this situation, the upper tolerances of Tables 320-2 and 320-3 as applied to the warm mix asphalt mix design do not apply.

**320-6.3.3 Rejection Criteria:** Reject any load or portion of a load of asphalt mix at the plant or at the roadway with a temperature outside of its respective master range shown in Table 320-2. Notify the Engineer of the rejection immediately.

Table 320-2	
Mix Temperature Master Range Tolerance	
Location	Acceptable Temperature Tolerance
Plant	Mixing Temperature $\pm 30$ F
Roadway	Compaction Temperature $\pm 30$ F

Table 320-3	
Mix Temperature Tolerance From Verified Mix Design	
Any Single Measurement	$\pm 25^{\circ}$ F
Average of Any Five Consecutive Measurements	$\pm 15^{\circ}$ F

### **320-7 Transportation of the Mixture.**

Transport the mix in trucks of tight construction, which prevents the loss of material and the excessive loss of heat and previously cleaned of all foreign material. After cleaning, thinly coat the inside surface of the truck bodies with soapy water or an asphalt release agent as needed to prevent the mixture from adhering to the beds. Do not allow excess liquid to pond in the truck body. Do not use a release agent that will contaminate, degrade, or alter the characteristics of the asphalt mix or is hazardous or detrimental to the environment. Petroleum derivatives (such as diesel fuel), solvents, and any product that dissolves asphalt are prohibited. Provide each truck with a tarpaulin or other waterproof cover mounted in such a manner that it can cover the entire load when required. When in place, overlap the waterproof cover on all sides so that it can be tied down. Cover each load during cool and cloudy weather and at any time it appears rain is likely during transit with a tarpaulin or waterproof cover. Cover and tie down all loads of friction course mixtures.