

New highway paint may be ‘green,’ but it’s not safe

Re: Ban has B.C. on hunt for durable highway line paint, May 9

The problem of the new environmentally friendly road line paint is not just that it has to be repainted every year. The major problem is that it is not safe in much of B.C.’s climate, and has almost certainly contributed to increased vehicle accidents. As soon as you combine our dark winter nights and rain, the lines become near invisible. This was not so with the old-style paint.

The astounding thing is that the feds banned oil baseline paint in 2010 due, apparently, to some oil content. Well, what do they think the entire road is normally made of? Asphalt — which is made from bitumen or other heavy ends of the crude barrel.

I do not see this visibility problem in Washington state, perhaps due to different paint and due to extensive use of reflective cat’s eyes in the centre lines.

Perhaps before spending all this money on research for new paints, the researchers should identify if the oil run-off from the oil-base paint is of any significance compared to that of the asphalt and other oil sources generated on roads. In addition, can they identify the human and financial cost (accidents) caused by nearinvisible road lines?

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