

Otsego Lake: Turning to Pervious Concrete



Challenge: Water drainage in common foot traffic areas, environmental runoff concerns near shower house

Solution: Supply Pervious Concrete for drainage in topographically challenging areas, contain and force runoff to percolate through soil to reduce environmental runoff concerns.

And you thought concrete was made to be tough and impenetrable...well, it is!

A type of concrete that's actually designed to be porous has the State of Michigan and others taking note as they seek ways to save land, dollars, and the environment.

Pervious concrete lets the "river run through it," so to speak, so that rainwater returns to, and replenishes groundwater, instead of creating puddles and stormwater runoff, an environmental liability.

In pervious concrete, carefully controlled amounts of water and cementitious materials are used to create a paste that forms a thick coating around aggregate particles. A pervious concrete mixture contains little or no sand, creating a substantial void content. Using sufficient paste to coat and bind the aggregate particles together creates a system of highly permeable, interconnected voids that drains quickly.

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Otsego Lake State Park was the first state park in Michigan to test the new product, having it poured in five campsites and a bathhouse. In past years, campers would complain about “rivers” that resulted from heavy rains, making paths difficult to travel, and transporting water, soil, and possible pollutants to the nearby lake. Now those campers are delighted to note safe, flat, dry concrete surfaces – ideal for firepits and walking – and free of stormwater runoff.

Other commercial and municipal users like pervious concrete’s ability to save space. Instead of having to create retention ponds to collect stormwater runoff, this new solution makes more efficient use of the land, and meets U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stormwater regulations. In fact, the use of pervious concrete is among the Best Management Practices (BMPs) recommended by the EPA and by other agencies and engineers across the country for the management of stormwater runoff.

It’s the classic win-win-win: the property owner can make better use of their acreage by avoiding the need for expensive and expansive retention ponds; their users and customers appreciate that puddles and mud disappears, leaving a clean, level surface; and, the environment wins because stormwater runoff is dramatically reduced.

“This is a really cool product that has an immediate market and applications,” says Team Elmer’s Regional Sales Manager Dan Beckelic.

