

Sealcoating Contractor Hiring Checklist: How to Choose the Right Asphalt Professional



The picture above is an example of a poor quality seal coating project a customer received from not properly qualifying a seal coating contractor.

Introduction:

Sealcoating protects your parking lot from **UV damage, water penetration, and premature wear**, but hiring the **wrong contractor** can lead to wasted money and poor results.

This **checklist** will help you ask the right questions, spot red flags, and find a **trusted sealcoating contractor** for your project.

✅ Step 1: Verify Their Experience & Reputation

- ✓ How long has the company been in business? (**Look for 5+ years of experience**)
- ✓ Are they **licensed and insured**? (**Ask for proof**)
- ✓ Do they specialize in **commercial sealcoating** or just residential driveways?
- ✓ Can they provide **recent references** or photos of past projects?
- ✓ Do they have **Google Reviews, BBB Accreditation, or industry certifications**?

🚩 **Red Flag:** A contractor **without reviews or references** may not be reputable.

✅ Step 2: Compare Proposals & Pricing

- ✓ Does the estimate include **full surface preparation** (cleaning, crack filling, and oil spot treatment)?
- ✓ Is the contractor using a **two-coat application** or just spraying one thin layer?
- ✓ Are they using **coal tar or asphalt emulsion**? (Asphalt emulsion is **safer** and lasts longer in many states.)
- ✓ Does the bid clearly list **pricing per square foot**?

🚩 **Red Flag:** Cheap, one-coat sealcoating won't last and may need to be redone within a year.

✅ Step 3: Check Their Equipment & Materials

- ✓ Are they using **commercial-grade sealers** instead of diluted, DIY-grade products?
- ✓ Do they have the **right spray rigs, squeegees, and crack sealing tools**?
- ✓ Are they following **industry best practices** for temperature and drying time?

🚩 **Red Flag:** If a contractor is **spraying sealcoat from a plastic drum, square plastic tank or bucket**, they may be using **diluted or low-quality sealer**.

✅ Step 4: Review the Contract Before Signing

- ✓ Does the contract include **start and completion dates**?
- ✓ Are **warranty details** included? (Some offer **1-2 year guarantees**.)
- ✓ Is the **total price and payment schedule** clearly outlined?
- ✓ Are all **services included** (crack filling, oil spot treatment, line striping, etc.)?

🚩 **Red Flag:** **Never pay 100% upfront**—a small deposit is normal, but full payment should be due **only after** the work is completed, inspected and you are 100% satisfied.

✅ Step 5: Avoid Common Sealcoating Scams

🚩 **Beware of "Leftover Material" Deals!**

- If someone knocks on your door saying they have **leftover sealcoat** from a previous job and offers a **steep discount**, it's usually a **scam**.
- Reputable contractors **don't have "leftover sealcoat"**—sealant is mixed fresh for each project.

🚩 **Avoid Cash-Only Contractors**

- Always get a **written contract** and **pay with a check or credit card** for protection.
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Final Tip: Get Multiple Quotes & Compare

By following this checklist, you'll avoid **low-quality contractors** and find a **trusted professional** who will protect your pavement for years.

💡 Need help finding a reputable sealcoating contractor?

👉 Click here to search our **Trusted Contractor Network!**

Why Qualifying a Sealcoating Contractor Matters: Beyond the Checklist

Hiring the **wrong** sealcoating contractor doesn't just cost you money—it can **damage your pavement, disrupt your tenants, and leave you dealing with headaches long after the check clears**. While most people focus on **pricing and reviews**, there's a whole other side to vetting a contractor that most property managers overlook.

Here's what you **really need to watch out for**—beyond just the hiring checklist.

Scenario 1: The "Weekend Warrior" Contractor

🚩 **Red Flag:** A contractor with a **truck, a tank, and a Facebook page**—but no real experience in **commercial asphalt maintenance**.

🔍 What Happens?

- You hire them because they're the cheapest bid.
- They apply the sealcoat **too thin** to save on material costs.
- Instead of lasting **3 years**, it wears off in **6 months**.
- They don't answer your calls when you ask why the job failed.

✅ What to Look For Instead:

- A contractor with a **portfolio of similar-sized projects** (strip malls, shopping centers, industrial parks).
 - Someone who **walks the site with you and explains their process**—not just someone who emails a bid with no details.
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Scenario 2: The “Yes Man” Who Won't Manage Expectations

🚩 **Red Flag:** A contractor who **agrees to everything** you ask for, even when it doesn't make sense.

What Happens?

- You want sealcoating done in a **high-traffic entrance**. They say “No problem!”—but don’t explain that sealer **won’t last long there**.
- They tell you “**It’ll be fine overnight**”, even though traffic needs to stay off it for **24-48 hours** to cure properly.
- Within a few weeks, **the sealer is gone**, tire marks are everywhere, and you’re **frustrated with the results**.

What to Look For Instead:

- A contractor who **pushes back when needed** and explains the limitations of sealcoating.
 - Someone who gives you **options**, like using different materials in high-wear areas.
 - A pro who **cares more about long-term results than just taking your check**.
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Scenario 3: The “Vanishing Act” Contractor

 **Red Flag:** A contractor who is **responsive before the job starts**, but **disappears after you pay**.

What Happens?

- The job looks great on Day 1.
- Two months later, **you notice patchy coverage, early wear, or sealer flaking off**.
- You call, email, text—but the contractor is **nowhere to be found**.
- They had **no warranty in writing**, so you have no recourse.

What to Look For Instead:

- A contractor with a **written warranty** on their work (minimum **1-year** coverage).
 - Someone who **documents their work** with before-and-after photos.
 - A company with **real office staff** (not just a burner cell phone).
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Scenario 4: The “Cut-Rate Crew” That Doesn’t Care About Your Tenants

 **Red Flag:** A contractor who **doesn’t ask about traffic flow, scheduling, or tenant coordination**.

What Happens?

- They show up **without warning**, blocking entrances and upsetting tenants.
- They **rush the job** instead of following proper cure times.
- They **fail to set up proper barricades**, leading to **cars tracking sealer everywhere**.
- You get **angry calls from tenants**, and now you’re stuck **dealing with a mess**.

✔ What to Look For Instead:

- A contractor who **asks about your business hours and traffic patterns**.
- Someone who provides a **detailed phasing plan** before starting.
- A pro who **communicates with tenants and property managers in advance**.

🚩 Scenario 5: The “Fly-By-Night” Scam Artist

🚩 **Red Flag:** A contractor knocking on doors offering a “leftover materials” discount.

🔍 What Happens?

- They claim they **just finished a job nearby** and have extra sealcoat to use up.
- You say yes to the “**today-only**” discount (because who doesn’t love a deal?).
- They slap on **heavily diluted sealer** that **washes away after the first rain**.
- They vanish without a trace—no website, no reviews, no warranty.

✔ What to Look For Instead:

- A **real** business with a physical address, website, and verifiable reviews.
- A company that **provides a detailed written estimate** before starting.
- A crew that **only uses fresh, high-quality materials**—not leftovers.



The picture above is an example of a poor quality seal coating project. The contractor is using a small handheld blower to prepare the parking lot (Prep is the most important part of the job), dirt and cracks are visible yet they are still sealcoating the parking lot using a square tank in the back of a pickup truck.

Final Thoughts: Don't Just Hire a Contractor—Hire a Partner

A great sealcoating contractor doesn't just show up, do the work, and leave. They:

- ✓ **Educate you on what will and won't work** for your property.
- ✓ **Communicate openly** about scheduling, tenant concerns, and traffic control.
- ✓ **Stand behind their work** with a warranty and long-term relationship.

If your contractor **doesn't ask good questions, can't explain their process, or seems too eager to "just get started"**—🚩 it's a red flag.

This check list has been provided by:

