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NEWS

ROADS

We're not responsible for 30% reduction in road life, say utilities

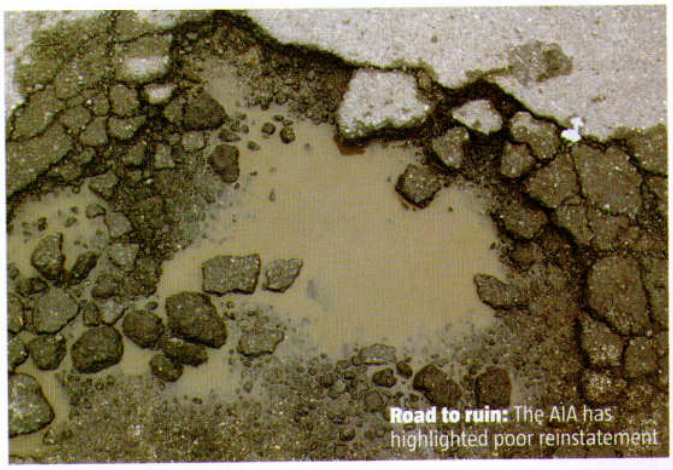
By Damian Arnold

Claims that utility works cut the serviceable life of roads by a third were rejected by the National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) this week.

The Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA) last week published research showing that reinstatement of 2M holes a year dug by utilities across England and Wales was so poor it reduced the life of roads by 30% on average.

But NJUG chief executive Richard Wakelen countered: "NJUG members carry out reinstatements to the road surface to the required standards. The primary factors that take a toll on the integrity of the road surface are: high levels of traffic, increasingly severe weather conditions, especially flooding, and increasing weight of traffic."

Highway authorities should rather focus on carrying out more regular maintenance, he added. "To ensure road surfaces are of a satisfactory standard requires regular maintenance, which is generally a better solution than one-off repairs."



Road to ruin: The AIA has highlighted poor reinstatement

Presenting the research last week, AIA chairman Jim Crick said that damage caused by utilities reinstatement was a major factor in poor road condition.

"Our road network is already crumbling and the damage caused by this type of work is storing up problems for the future that need to be accounted for," said Crick. "Premature resurfacing or reconstruction of the carriageway is an unnecessary expense."

CSS engineering committee chairman Matthew Lugg said newly established procedures under the Traffic Management Act to charge utilities for late reinstatement would not deal with the problem.

"The latest changes under the Traffic Management Act will not be adequate to deal with the problem. It will only cover the administration costs of having to co-ordinate work on the highway,"

the week

The week ahead compiled by **Kevin Walsh**

Friday

Email is ruining my life

Training to deal with email, whatever next? Apparently some companies' employees are so inundated they've had to hire consultants to train workers to work through their emails more efficiently.
BBC2, 7pm

Unreported World

This week's programme takes a look at the devastation caused across Bangladesh by flooding. Ramita Navai investigates the impact of climate change on the country, and the severity of what may lie ahead.
Channel 4, 7.35pm

Saturday

Six Nations Rugby: Scotland v England

No points from three games, and De Luca set to miss the match at Murrayfield... things aren't looking to good for the