

Step-By-Step Tips to Conducting a Great Asphalt Plant Tour

An asphalt plant tour is one of the most effective ways to establish a working relationship with legislators and pavement specifiers while also educating them about important issues facing the industry.

Scheduling the Plant Tour

1. Identify a location and a window of time to schedule the plant tour.
2. Identify the primary and secondary audiences for the tour (members of Congress, state legislators, county or municipal officials, DOT officials, etc.).
3. Pinpoint a few dates or a specific week when Congress is in recess to use as your request dates.
4. Use the "[Asphalt Plant Tour Invitation Letter Template](#)" as a guide to invite the identified tour participants. (The template targets members of Congress, but can easily be modified for other office holders.)

Organizing the Plant Tour

1. Preparing the plant for the tour:
 - a) Plant cleanliness: Sweep or hose down the yard to control dust, wash equipment, and properly dispose of waste that cannot be recycled or reused.
 - b) Regulatory compliance: Ensure all plant operations are in compliance with applicable state and federal safety and environmental regulations.
 - c) Plan the route: Map out the tour ahead of time. Start the tour at an indoor or covered location with seating conducive to providing a company overview and briefing on plant operations, material properties of asphalt pavements, and industry issues. Plan the tour route to highlight new technologies, practices, procedures, and other areas of interest. Post signs at key locations to identify specific information and messages for each area.
 - d) Notify employees: Alert all facility employees and subcontractors in advance of the date and time of the tour.
2. Tour logistics:
 - a) Prepare name badges for tour participants and key employees involved in the tour.
 - b) Align information on the tour with known interests of the representative. For example, if environmental concerns are high on the legislator's agenda, highlight the recyclability of asphalt and the benefits of warm mix; if they are concerned about spending, point to the economic advantages of investing in maintaining good-quality roads.
 - c) Identify the employees who will conduct the tour and/or briefing of operations.
 - d) Contact NAPA for a proposed agenda to use as guide for the structure of the event.

- e) Contact NAPA/SAPA for talking points and information on key issues and industry handouts. Prepare briefing folders with corporate literature brochures and industry information.

Conducting the Plant Tour

1. Ensure individuals conducting the tour and/or briefings are personable and knowledgeable about the company's history, operations, and activities.
2. Be ready to highlight the economic value of the plant to the legislator's district (i.e., number of employees, value of work conducted in the state or district, etc.).
3. Take pictures to thoroughly document the event.
4. Move things along as your agenda indicates; these are elected officials with tight schedules.
5. Don't forget to thank them for attending!
6. Report back to NAPA about the tour, including photos, highlights of the meeting, and anything that needs follow up.