

On Stable Soil

RUSTON PAVING CO. PROVIDES HIGH-QUALITY SITE WORK AND PAVING EXPERTISE. BY RUSS GAGER



Ruston Paving Co. has been a trusted contractor for more than 70 years.

Synergy is especially valuable when it comes to the use of expensive construction equipment. So Ruston Paving Co. Inc. takes advantage of its sizable fleet of paving equipment to apply it to soil stabilization. An example of this is the company's work on the cottage-style student living quarters for North Carolina State University in Raleigh, N.C.

The housing – which had to be completed by August 2012 when students returned from their summer break – was to be built on a brownfield site, so no material could be removed from it, although traditional methods would have called for removal and replacement of the soil with suitable material.

"Often, we stabilize a site as a cost-saving measure," President and CEO Mark Ruston points out. "There's a cost to hauling material offsite along with disposal and tipping fees, depending on the situation." Another benefit of stabilizing the existing soil is so construction can continue through the winter, which came into play on this project.

Rain during the fall of 2011 delayed preparation of the site, which measured approximately 24,000 square yards. Once the rain let up, the soil was stabilized for the building pads and infrastructure. This was achieved by mixing approximately 1,200 tons of Portland cement to a depth of 16 inches into the unstable subgrade. This stabilization method

created a better pavement structure for the life of the project.

The soil stabilization process requires graders, bulldozers and compaction equipment, along with specialized machinery to pulverize and mix the soil and apply the additives – such as cement or lime – at the proper rate before the additives are mixed with the soil.

Ruston Paving Co. Inc.

www.rustonpaving.com

- *Projected 2013 revenue:* \$50 million
- *Divisions:* Durham and Greensboro, N.C.; Manassas, Va.; Syracuse, Rochester and Watertown, N.Y.
- *Employees:* 150
- *Specialty:* Commercial asphalt paving

"We see the pavement as the entire paving structure."

—Mark Ruston, president and CEO

'We've been steadily growing for many years by retaining talented people.'

Paving, Too

"Doing the stabilization allowed us to get our foot in the door with the grading contractor and the general contractor," points out Mark Rogers, Ruston Paving's North Carolina regional manager.

"After seeing the quality of our work and the employees that we had, it 'cemented' their decision to use us for the asphalt paving portion of the project," he continues. "It also led us to future work with the grading contractor and the general contractor for stabilization and paving work."

As a result of the project's success with soil stabilization, Ruston Paving continued on to pave the parking stalls and drive lanes with a 2-inch asphalt surface lift, covering approximately 20,000 square yards. The stabilization and paving cost approximately \$450,000. The company also paved a new 2,500-square-yard street for the city of Raleigh and widened and overlaid an existing city street.

The new street required installation of an initial 1.5-inch surface course during construction and a final 1-inch surface course at the end of construction. The existing street required 400 tons of full-depth widening, and overlaying another 1,500 square yards with 1.5-inch asphalt surface course. The total asphalt tonnage applied for the entire project was approximately 3,200 tons.

Ruston Paving had a subcontractor complete all the painted pavement markings on site with signs and wheel stops and all thermoplastic pavement markings on the city's streets. "The bottom line is the project was completed on time, and students are enjoying the biggest swimming pool in Raleigh," Rogers says.

Not Vertical

Ruston Paving is a commercial and industrial asphalt paving and site work contractor that specializes in the new construction and repair of asphalt pavement surfaces such as parking lots and roadways. The company also provides athletic surfaces such as tennis courts and running tracks. It has divisions in Greensboro and Durham, N.C.; Manassas, Va.; and Syracuse, Watertown and Rochester, N.Y.

Ruston is not interested in integrating vertically and offering mass excavation or curb and



Ruston Paving says its family atmosphere is a significant factor in its longevity.

gutter installation. "We see the pavement as the entire paving structure, starting with the subgrade up through the base and including the asphalt pavement," he says.

"Because soil stabilization is such a specialty and because not that many people are geared up with the equipment and expertise, we've allowed ourselves to take on entire sites," Ruston continues.

The company's project managers have civil engineering backgrounds, and in-house engineers can provide value engineering for projects. The design of pavement sections and the amount of treatment, depth and quantities of additives required for soil stabilization depends on the requirements of a project and existing conditions. Each division consults with Ruston Paving's Pavement and Soil Specialist Tim McConnell on those techniques.

"We do a lot of in-house design for our clients based on locally, regionally and nationally accepted techniques," McConnell says. "If a client comes to us, we can provide them with

appropriate pavement design, whether it's a parking lot or an industrial trucking facility."

70 Years

Ruston attributes his family owned company's 70-year longevity – it was founded by his grandfather, Mike, and expanded by his father, Larry – to the company's family feeling. Vice President Lang Butler points out that this family based atmosphere extends to each of the company's divisions.

"The guys that are working in our divisions look at us as a small company, but we have the backbone and structure of a larger corporation that continues to allow us to grow geographically," Butler says.

That small-company feel enables employees to have their ideas heard. "It's really all about the talent of the people that we have," Ruston emphasizes. "We've been steadily growing for many years by retaining very talented people at all levels, from the field on up to top management, and everyone in between." ♦