An explanation of Oil and Chip on roadways.

There are two thought processes with oil and chip. A correct process, and a wrong process. The correct process is to use this method on slightly aged roads that have pock marks and open pores. Oil and chip fills in the open pores and pock marks to make the roadway watertight again. This can extend the life of the roadway. West Leesport Road falls into this category. The township patched the roadway last year with paving. The patched areas had open pores and many perimeter edges. By installing oil and chip, water will be prevented from getting into and under the patched area. This will prevent the water from peeling or popping the patched areas off of the roadway, especially in winter / spring months.

There is another process for oil and chip called a "reverse seal" design. Oil and chip is used to seal the road underneath new paving when a road is shattered, or cracked very badly, what we refer to as alligator cracking. The oil and chip is installed over the shattered roadway prior to the new paving overlay. The oil and chip glues together the spider webbed cracked areas to create a stable base for the new paving. We then install a 2 ½" paving overlay to provide structure to the new roadway. We have been utilizing this method of design over the last six years. It has worked very well for us.

The wrong thought process is to install oil and chip as a band aid to hold together a fractured road that is falling apart to glue it back together. Sometimes this is done as a cost effective temporary fix to a damaged road that requires a reconstruction that is currently unaffordable. Oil and chip is a very cost friendly installation when compared to paving overlays.

Nobody likes oil and chip because when they drive over it, they hear the stones hitting the bottom of their car and the stones are laid loose over the road. When you seal your driveway, you just use an oil sealer and keep vehicles from driving on it until it cures. Roads cannot be blocked off in the same manner, so stones are placed over the oil sealer to allow the continued use by vehicles. The cars work the loose stone into the oil and after a period of time, usually two weeks, the roadway is swept to remove any remaining loose stones. If you sweep too quickly, you can remove too much stone and expose the oil. After the stones are swept, what remains is a watertight roadway with very little loose stones.