

### Arlington's new sidewalks assist visitors, environment

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Arlington National Cemetery's installation of a new state-of-the-art sidewalk along Eisenhower Drive not only increases safety to visitors, but is also a better choice for the environment.

The new sidewalks are a much safer alternative for cemetery visitors who have previously shared the road with funeral processions, maintenance vehicles, and tour buses that travel through the cemetery each day. And as an added benefit, the project involves using an innovative, flexible rubber-like material which is created from waste tires – an important recycling effort in Arlington's "Go Green" initiative.



Contractors spread the softened rubberized material evenly over gravel to form the new sidewalks along Eisenhower Drive. *Photo by Melissa Bohan*

Waste tires are a management and disposal problem in Virginia. Landfill disposal is expensive because tires need to be cut apart before they are thrown away, according to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's website. Recycling tires for other uses reduces illegal dumping.

A whole recycled tire creates three square feet of rubberized material. Arlington's installation of 20,000 square feet of rubberized material along Eisenhower will recycle nearly 6,700 tires, all of which came from the local area. Phase one of the sidewalk installation along Eisenhower is now complete. Phase two will begin in the spring.

Along with the environmental benefit, the material offers a variety of improvements over other paving options. For one, the material cures in 24 hours, making it accessible to pedestrians and vehicles in a short amount of time. Also, the material will not burn, crack, or break, and can withstand up to 90,000 pounds of weight per square foot, making it extremely durable. This durability helps to eliminate or reduce future costly repairs.

"The material also allows water to percolate down into the ground, reducing the amount of water runoff on to the street. Since water is able to pass through the material, in addition to its rough texture, it prevents ice from forming on the surface, increasing safety during the colder months of the year," said Kent Carson, the cemetery's project manager for the installation.