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CANADIAN NORTH
seriously northern

PREFERRED AIRLINE OF THE NWT AND NUNAVUT CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

Trends and Technology

Thanks to the fact that it can be applied easily in cold temperatures, EZ Street cold paving technology will likely revolutionize paving projects across the country and across the North.

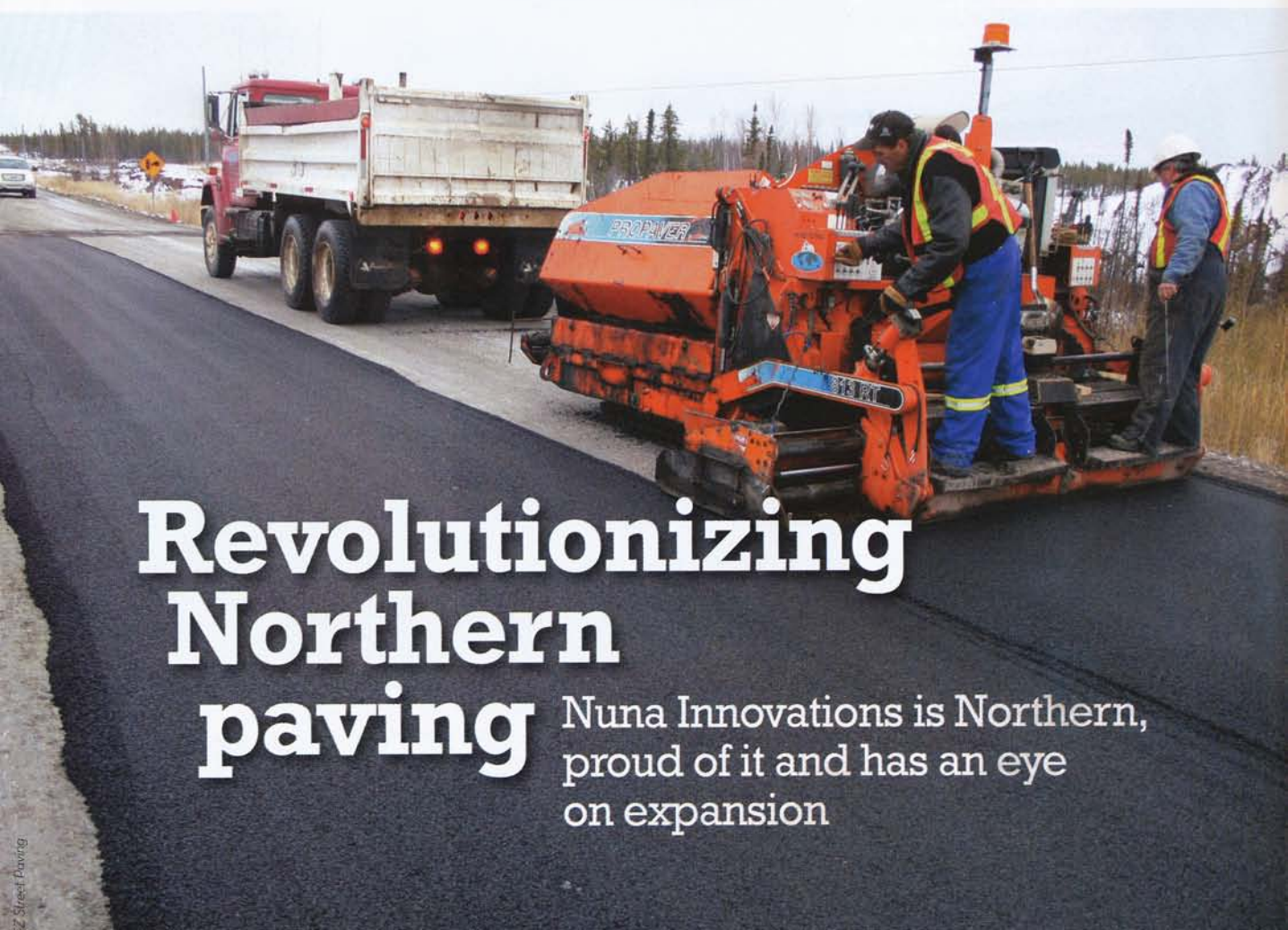
The product is made like normal asphalt, but a special polymer that binds the material allows it to be stored and installed at extremely cold temperatures. That makes it perfect for the North and just about anywhere else. Based in Yellowknife, Nuna Innovations is a division of Nuna Logistics which focuses on innovative new products. EZ Street is their main brand and the company owns the Canadian rights to the polymer. In just over three years, they've gone from one patching job to producing thousands of tonnes of the product at 14 locations across Canada.

About three years ago, the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Transportation decided to test EZ Street on the Ingraham Trail outside of Yellowknife on a cold October day. "We had just one guy with a rake and a shovel installing these patches," says Chris Hunt of Nuna Innovations. "When we came back in the spring, the usual materials used on the road were just eaten up and not one centimetre of our patches had eroded. Right away, the department of transportation went, 'wow, this is perfect'."

Right now, the product is being used by the City of Yellowknife and the Department of Transportation to patch roads. But EZ Street would like to start surfacing entire roads in communities from Nunavut to the Yukon. Hunt says the company can

surface a community road for about \$190,000 per kilometre, though that cost depends on a number of factors.

Perhaps even more remarkably, with a bit of training each community can do the resurfacing work on its own, using a minimal amount of readily-available capital. Conveniently, and remarkably, the material is produced in mobile plants made by a company aptly-named Nomad. These facilities can be trucked or flown into communities. Also, EZ Street can be used to resurface community arenas. It takes up to six weeks to create a rink on sand or gravel and only four days on a solid surface. "We know the first community we do is going to change the life of that community," says Hunt. "This is not chip seal. This is not a



Revolutionizing Northern paving

Nuna Innovations is Northern, proud of it and has an eye on expansion

temporary solution. Ours is higher performing than traditional asphalt."

At a recent surfacing job at the Toronto airport, Hunt says EZ Street tested as being four times stronger than traditional hot asphalt. It's also remarkably quiet. In the Ontario city of Mississauga, following the resurfacing of a highway, the response was wildly positive. "When we were done the project all of the neighbours came out and they were all clapping on the side of the road because the noise was such a problem," Hunt says.

The company's also working on an innovative product adaptation: UV reflective asphalt that won't store heat. "That's why roads break down. The rock doesn't break down. The UV and heat breaks down standard asphalt oil," says Hunt. "And that's one of the biggest most important questions in

asphalt. Why are roads black? It's the worst possible colour. There's only one reason. Because they've always used black oil. But you don't have to."

The UV-reflective product's potential to limit the heave of roads on permafrost is tremendous. As a side bonus, the new product can be produced in any colour. Now the company's task is to technically measure exactly how much UV is coming off this new road surface. Hunt says he's been told the idea is possibly the most transformative technology in the history of road surfacing.

As the business expands, some might see EZ Street's Northern location as a disadvantage in terms of Canada-wide logistics and sales. But not Hunt. In fact, he says there are clear benefits: "The thing we love is when we go anywhere, people know that if we tried it here first and if we're from here, it must work."



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