



Grand Island resident Don Keller is among many unhappy with the new road surface put on Fareway Lane by Suit-Kote. He pointed out defects in the surface on Thursday, Sept. 21, 2017. (Derek Gee/Buffalo News)

Grand Island residents block road crew after paving turns into 'pudding'

By [Nancy A. Fischer](#) | Published September 21, 2017 | Updated September 21, 2017

Grand Island neighbors banded together in protest this past week, parking their cars up and down Fareway Lane to stop a road contractor from returning to repair its repaving of the street.

"You can't skateboard, you can't ride a bike ... it's gritty and rough," Fareway Lane resident Don Keller said of the road's surface. "We want (the town) to do something."

Alan Janik, also of Fareway Lane, said his neighbors were so angry with the repaving job by Suit-Kote Corp. that they came out of their houses to confront the road crews "like they had pitchforks and torches in an old Dracula movie."

Keller said residents usually park in driveways or garages, but they all came out to park in the street to stop Suit-Kote from returning to "micropave." He and others said they want the black stuff cleaned up off the road and it to be restored to asphalt.



Fareway Lane residents try to block the street to stop roads contractors from returning by parking their cars on the street. (Provided photo)

Keller, who works from home, said he watched last week as the crews sprayed a black latex substance on his road and then finished by "smoothing it out" with what he said looked like burlap bags from the back of their trucks. He said there were no rollers used.

He said that when residents were allowed to drive on their street the next day they found that the black, latex material had been sprayed onto the curbs and there were dangerous low spots in the street. Those who drove on the still soft material a day later left tire ruts and tracked the stuff into driveways and yards, he said.

"You could literally scoop this substance like pudding, and it was tracked everywhere. It was a complete disaster," agreed Town Supervisor Nathan McMurray. "It's just mush."

"I don't think we can leave that slush there on those roads, and I would hope the residents would allow Suit-Kote in to fix those roads," McMurray said. "I want to fix those roads right now."

The company will do whatever needs to be done to correct the problem, said Michael Kehl, sales manager for Suit-Kote.

Keller said the residents are not unwilling to compromise and he said he hoped to have a neighborhood meeting this weekend.

But Deputy Highway Superintendent Richard Crawford Jr. put a hold on Suit-Kote returning to fix the road until a solution could be worked out.



The new road surface on Fareway Lane in Grand Island contains tire prints and other anomalies, making the surface rough and uneven on Sept. 21. (Derek Gee/Buffalo News)

Suit-Kote had agreed to return to the town next week to look at every road application put down and to make repairs. Some repairs already have been done on Carter Creek, but Fareway Lane has not received a second coat.

Suit-Kote never had a chance to apply the second coat on Fareway because the first coat was so bad that residents blocked Suit-Kote's access to the street, McMurray said.

Crawford said the contractor was hired to do micropaving, a preventative repair to stop potholes. The problem arose because there was too much water in the mix, preventing the mix from hardening correctly.

"We wanted to go back and fix it. We had our people out there," Kehl said. "It's done in a two-part process. First we put on the scratch coat, and then we go back and level it off for a nice finish, but we went back to cover it up and make it whole for the town, the residents went door-to-door to get everybody to park on the streets and we couldn't right our wrong."

Suit-Kote blocks the drains when paving and there is "absolutely no truth" to reports that storm drains had been filled with paving materials, he said.

"We were willing to rectify it as soon as we found out what the problem was, but (by then) it had taken on a whole new life and became very political," Kehl said.

McMurray said the fires had been stoked by politics because Crawford was running for highway superintendent.

But Keller disagreed saying, "We don't want to make this political. Nothing blurs red and blue lines more than a neighborhood in crisis."

Crawford said Suit-Kote also did work on Continental, Brandywine, Bluejay and Sandpiper roads in 2017, but the town has suspended any further work with Suit-Kote until next year. He said the town has worked with Suit-Kote, which is headquartered in Cortland, for the past 20 years.