

Caltrans, contractors clashing over road quality

By Adam Ashton, Sacramento Bee

Every time you pay more at California's gas pumps to fill your tank, you're feeling the price to fix the state's roads.

But are you feeling the improvement?

California's newly paved roads are built to standards of smoothness that are the strictest in the country. With that standard comes high costs that have surprised contractors, who are fighting for reimbursement and bitterly condemning a level of smooth they say no driver would ever notice.

At least one major contractor also contends the smooth pavement is dangerous, arguing that corrective measures he takes to hit the target actually shave features that are supposed to keep roads safe in wet weather.

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