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Potholes Causing Problems For Drivers

Melanie Stout
Katie DeLong

MILWAUKEE – Pothole season arrived early this year.

All the thawing and freezing is causing some roads to break up.

JAY'S TMJ4's Melanie Stout was sent out to find potholes, and she didn't have any problems finding big ones.

Many drivers don't even see the potholes until they hit them. Others work to avoid them.

Potholes around 30th and Lincoln were causing problems for several drivers.

Mr. P's Tires on Highway 100 have seen dozens of angry people come in after they hit a pothole.

"They can't avoid them and they know they hit them and they're rupturing tires. There's nothing they can do. It's either hit the pothole or hit the car next to you," Steven Schmidt of Mr. P's Tires said.

"A lot of people with bent rims, a lot of cars that are wobbling and they're thinking they have tire issues. They come in and we take the tires off and we're finding many bent rims front or back and that causes the vibration issues they're experiencing," Schmidt said.

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystrnj4.com/news/local/13686307.html>

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Race To Repair Potholes Before The Snow

Melanie Stout
Katie DeLong

OZAUKEE COUNTY – Crews in Ozaukee County were busy repairing potholes before the snow started falling.

Crews were out racing to fix those pot holes before the big storm Bill Carroll and Joel Alore were out all over Port Washington trying to patch up potholes.

"We got pulled off doing trees and were told to do potholes because of the big storm coming," DPW's Bill Carroll said.

This is just a temporary fix until spring. Port Washington, like many other communities have seen potholes early this season because of all the freezing and thawing, and they plan to see more.

These potholes do wreak havoc on tires and suspension systems and city crews are hearing from drivers complaining about these nasty surprises.

"We've seen an increase in potholes. I wouldn't say it's significant amount, but they do need attention before we get into the next storm," Port Washington Street Commissioner Dave Ewig said.

The snow started falling in Ozaukee County around 4:00 p.m. Tuesday.

Crews were working all day Tuesday to get the roads prepared for Tuesday night's storm.

Crews were salting Ozaukee County roads all day Tuesday. There is plenty of salt available there.

Crews are on standby waiting to hit the roadways when the snow begins to accumulate.

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystmj4.com/news/local/15328006.html>

<http://www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Race+To+Repair+Potholes+Before+The+Sn...> 5/6/2008



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Pothole Patrol on City Streets

George Mallet

MILWAUKEE - If you drive your car on city streets then you are aware of the problem. There is a rapidly multiplying bumper crop of potholes out there.

Henry Hobbs knows. "Capitol Drive is bad," he says. "Silver Spring is bad too. The roads is all terrible out there."

Hobbs is employed in the service department at Andrew Toyota. The dealership has seen a lot of bent rims, worn tires, ruined suspensions and even body damage caused by the jolt of cars dipping into giant craters.

"My buddy just about ripped out his entire front end," a customer waiting in the Andrews lobby says. "I think an entire family could have been living in that pothole. The thing was that damned big!"

Fixing the damage caused by potholes isn't cheap. "Three, four even five thousand dollars damage is possible," says service writer Daniel Rogers of Andrew Toyota. "You can do a lot of damage in a split second."

The City of Milwaukee received 991 calls about potholes in January alone. This month there have already been nearly 400 calls. Combined the calls to DPW represent a 45 percent increase over last year during the same period.

But the city can't fix potholes if it doesn't know about them. If you know of a problem area, phone the city's call center at 286-CITY.

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystmj4.com/news/local/15531577.html>

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DPW Crews Hard At Work Before Storm

Ty Milburn
Katie DeLong

MILWAUKEE - Another big storm is headed our way this weekend, and Milwaukee Department of Public Works crews are hard at work, preparing for the storm.

Crews were hard at work filling potholes Friday.

"All it is is a temporary fix,"

They were racing against the clock preparing for yet another storm on the horizon.

"Once the streets are snow covered, you can't see the potholes and you won't be able to fill them,"

City leaders insist they are ready the next big storm, but after such a bruising winter, you can see signs wear and tear are starting to show.

Workers are exhausted. Equipment is breaking down and now we are learning the city is running low on salt

"It's storm after storm. Probably the worst winter I have been through,"

Homeowner Gary Thiel is getting ready too.

He was out with shovel in hand trying to get a jump start on the snow. He admits he's ready for spring.

"I'd rather be reading the paper in the morning instead of looking out and thinking I should be out there shoveling," Thiel said.

Officials at DPW say their crews will be on standby all weekend. Because they are running low on salt, you will notice they will be using a salt - sand mixture on side streets.

DPW's Dale Mejaki admits some of the fixes are shabby.

"Clearly we have some work to do on the workmanship that our crews are doing," DPW Infrastructure Operations Manager Dale Mejaki said.

He also contends wet, frozen roads make this the worst time to repair potholes.

"The quality of work this time of year is not what it should be because it isn't what we can get in summer time," Dale Mejaki said.

No formal action came out of this meeting Wednesday, just an opportunity for common council members to say they're not satisfied with the job that's being done.

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystmj4.com/news/local/15600972.html>

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Getting Money For Pothole Repairs

Charles Benson

MILWAUKEE - Most people don't know this, but you can actually file a claim in Milwaukee, Waukesha or wherever you were when you hit that pothole to pay for those expensive repairs.

They're everywhere: potholes the size of Bigfoot prints.

"My luck has been to hit one every day when I go to work," Jolanta Voigt said.

It's the price we're all paying for the rough winter. Car owners have had busted rims and front ends blown out of alignment.

In Milwaukee, hundreds have filed claims with the city attorney's office seeking money for costly repairs, but don't hold your breath for a big check.

"We do evaluate each one individually," Milwaukee City Attorney Grant Langley said. "There are occasions we pay claims, but I will say most are denied."

Even if you can prove a pothole damaged your car, you haven't hit the jackpot. You have to prove the city knew about it and ignored it for several days.

That's why Alderman Jim Bohl is upset. He doesn't think the city has the manpower and resources to move fast enough to fix all the potholes.

"We can't be as responsive as we should be in rectifying potholes and if that is the case, the city is culpable," Bohl said.

Still want to file a claim? Here's what you need: a dollar estimate and a detailed description on where and when it happened.

Find this article at:

<http://www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Getting+Money+For+Pothole+Repairs&exp...> 5/6/2008

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Pothole Problem Worse With Warmer Temps?

Mick Trevey
Katie DeLong

MILWAUKEE - If you think the potholes are bad now, just wait. The warmer weather is going to make driving on the roads even worse.

Potholes happen when water gets into cracks on the road and freezes. That pops up the pavement as soon as the weather warms up, which is supposed to happen this weekend.

McKensie Klein drives the streets of Milwaukee.

"Locust is the absolute worst for potholes," McKensie Klein said.

She feels sick of all the bouncing and wondering if the huge holes will damage her car.

TODAY'S TMJ4's Mick Trevey: "So do you try to swerve to avoid them or what do you do?"

"I try to swerve to avoid them but it's kind of hard with traffic so you don't hit anybody else," McKensie Klein said.

The task of fixing all the potholes might seem insurmountable, except for one Milwaukee crew determined to fill them all one at a time.

"It's a lot of potholes out here," Daryl Tate said.

The city of Milwaukee is filling potholes with what they call a cold mixture for now. They'll fill them again in the spring with a hotter mix that will be more permanent.

Public works crews let TODAY'S TMJ4's Mick Trevey take a hand at trying to fill some of the potholes. The stuff is stick and heavy, and the crews have a lot of work to do.

The hours of work aren't so bad, because the crew feels like they're doing good.



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Enormous Potholes Take Down Five Cars

Michael George

MILWAUKEE - A set of monster potholes at 61st and Hampton gave at least five cars flat tires and front end damage on Sunday night.

It brought Akiya Carter's night to an abrupt stop.

"The biggest pothole probably in the city of Milwaukee comes out of nowhere, and I catch a flat, instantly," Carter said.

Carter soon had company. Drivers said it seemed like every car passing by ended up with a flat or a damaged wheel.

It's like a spike strip was placed on the road. At least five cars were brought to a dead stop by the potholes.

It wasn't just one pothole, it's several. One was large and deep enough that when tires dropped in, they didn't always come out.

"All you heard is like a big boom. It's like a bang, boom noise," said Jasmyne Houston-Carter, who ended up with a flat tire.

Drivers rolled up their sleeves to put on spare tires. Some had to call for a tow. After five cars were damaged, a DPW crew came by and patched things up. It just happened too late for Akiya Carter.

"I couldn't avoid it, there was oncoming traffic. There was nothing I could do," Carter said.

Warm weather on Sunday most likely contributed to the potholes. DPW crews plan on going after the worst trouble spots this week.

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystmj4.com/news/local/16168412.html>

<http://www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Enormous+Potholes+Take+Down+Five+Car...> 5/6/2008

"Every day we come out here, we try to fill as many potholes as we can because we have to travel these same roads," Daryl Tate said.

So when will these get fixed? The City of Milwaukee won't have pothole crews working this weekend. They're going to have their workers focus on keeping drains clear as things melt. Wauwatosa also says they're not filling anymore potholes until Monday.

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystmj4.com/news/local/16128507.html>

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Top Four Streets For Pothole Complaints

Charles Benson

MILWAUKEE - It's been a bad year for potholes, but which city streets are the worst?

The city says it received a record number of pothole complaints last month - more than 1,800 calls.

TODAY'S TMJ4's Charles Benson asked DPW to give us the top four streets with the most complaints.

They say South Howell is pretty bad.

In fact, number four on the list with 37 complaints last month is South Howell and we found out why pretty quickly. TODAY'S TMJ4's Charles Benson found potholes almost immediately after driving down South Howell.

Josephine Reinke has seen them all.

"From here to there you're zig zagging trying to avoid potholes," Josephine Reinke said.

Number three with 56 complaints is Locust Street.

The potholes on Locust aren't very deep, but they are big. TODAY'S TMJ4's Charles Benson got his tape measure out: one pothole was 32 inches long and two feet wide.

Number two on the list is Hampton Avenue around 61st Street, but it looks like those potholes have been patched up.

However, five cars Sunday night ended up with flat tires. Hampton had 63 complaints last month.

The worst street in the city for pothole complaints is Silver Spring.

Just ask Freddy Mercado who lost a tire.



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Freeze and Thaw Leads to Pothole Problems

Jonathan Vigliotti

MILWAUKEE - The freeze and thaw after last week's storms has turned streets into Swiss cheese.

Crews with Milwaukee's Department of Public Works spent Monday fixing potholes. Officials say winter is the time of year these huge craters in the ground get out of control.

"Every time it stops snowing, and it starts warming up a bit, the calls [from drivers] start coming in," said DPW supervisor Darrel Sopczak. He explained that roads crack and break apart from freezing water.

Drivers fall victim to potholes every day. Justine James said potholes damaged her car's tires.

"I think that something needs to be done about this because it's just destroying people's cars," she complained.

She reported the pothole but said it took at least two weeks to fix. Even then, she said, the road was still a problem.

City officials say they try to fix potholes within three days of a complaint. They say it could take longer depending on the volume of calls and weather.

In the city of Milwaukee, you can report a pothole by calling 414-286-CITY (2489).

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystmj4.com/news/local/6319332.html>

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Charles Benson: "You've lost two tires on Silver Spring?"

"Yeah," Freddy Mercado said.

Charles Benson: "What do you think of these pot holes?"

"It's really bad," Freddy Mercado said.

Silver Spring rang up 79 complaints.

The city says you should call about pothole problems and not assume someone already has.

The number to call is 286-CITY.

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystmj4.com/news/local/16204247.html>

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DPW Officials On the Hot Seat

Shelley Walcott

MILWAUKEE - Department of Public Works officials were on the hot seat Wednesday.

They faced alderman and members of the public at a hearing at City Hall.

The hearing was held to find out what can be done to improve snow removal at crosswalks and speed up pothole patching.

DPW managers explained they're doing their best, even though they are already more than \$1-million over their snow removal budget.

"I'm not going to say money's no object," said DPW Commissioner Jeff Mantes, "but certainly we do not let the budget stop us from doing what we need to do to keep the city safe.

Many people with disabilities attended the meeting to complain about crosswalks blocked with snow. Darlene Conley told the committee, "With myself in a wheelchair and many people I know, it's impossible."

Conley said she'd even be willing to pay a proposed \$7 a year tax hike for snow removal if that would help matters.

A final decision on that tax hike should be made by November.

Find this article at:

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Pothole Problem Will Likely Get Worse

Ty Milburn
Katie DeLong

MILWAUKEE - No doubt about it, officials say all the potholes we see were caused by the brutal winter we had.

Just when you think the problem couldn't get any worse, it seems like it will.

Janell Bennett has had it with all the dodging and weaving she has to do to avoid potholes all over the city.

"It's just crazy. They are everywhere. It's terrible. They are everywhere. You can't get away from them," Bennett said.

As bad as the roads are, TODAY'S TMJ4's Ty Milburn didn't have to heart to tell her things are likely to get much worse.

Just ask the city's top pothole guy.

"It's worse than it's ever been since I've been here in 25 years," Street Repair District Manager Daryl Sobczak said.

Ty Milburn: "Twenty-five years you've never seen it this bad?"

"Never!" Sobczak said.

Complaint calls about potholes have doubled since last year. On top of that, we are just entering peak pothole season: where the roads are freezing and thawing every day.

Sobczak says more potholes are all but certain.

"It probably will get worse," Sobczak said.

The combination of the snow melt off and the spring rain is going to cause more problems under the pavement. The city leaders insist they are trying to fix the problem, but it appears bigger than they can handle.

The common council gave the pothole department an extra \$120,000 for more workers, but insiders say the money is just a drop in the bucket for what it will really cost to fill all of the holes.

"That's terrible. They need to fix them," Bennett said.

What's a driver to do? Be careful, be cautious and patient.

It's going to be a few months yet until workers can really get at fixing filling the potholes with the hot mix.

In the meantime, if you see any, you call 286-CITY to report them.

Find this article at:

<http://www.todaystmj4.com/news/local/16560566.html>

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