



City of Seattle
Office of the Mayor

News

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Contact: Aaron Pickus, Mayor's Office
Tel: (206) 233-2650

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City Emphasizing Pothole Repairs After Winter Storm

25,110 potholes filled in 2011

SEATTLE— In the wake of last week's winter storm, the City of Seattle is focusing on roadway repairs. The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has deployed four Pothole Rangers crews to address potholes created by the recent freezing weather.

"Freezing weather and heavy precipitation mean that we're seeing more potholes. We've added dollars to respond to pothole repair requests," said Mayor Mike McGinn.

"The City was prepared and did a good job responding to the storm" stated Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Transportation Committee chair. "Now it's time to clean up, and to quickly get out and fix the potholes created by the freezing weather."

As last week's winter storm began winding down, City officials started making preparations to deal with the storm's effects, including an expected increase in the number of potholes. As crews finished their snow and ice removal work, SDOT began redeploying resources to fill potholes.

These efforts build on work done in 2011 to address potholes and street repairs. SDOT crews filled 25,110 potholes in 2011, two and a half times the number filled in 2010. With the start of the new year, the department has \$9 million available to address street surface repairs including potholes. Approximately \$8.5 million of this is dedicated to arterial streets.

Mayor McGinn and the City Council allocated \$3 million last year to surface repairs from "Rubble Yard" sales funds. In 2011, SDOT focused on streets with frequent reports of potholes and delivered 15.8 lane-miles of paving across 86 sites, more than a fourfold increase over historic levels. As drivers can attest, the work provided an immediate relief from potholes and should result in fewer roadway issues at those locations. An additional \$1.65 million in "Rubble Yard" funds has been committed this year, for a total budget of \$8.5 million, to further support major arterial maintenance needs.

Potholes are a sign of aging infrastructure, and occur when street pavement cracks and breaks because of water and traffic. During the winter, water under the pavement can freeze and

expand, and then thaw and contract. This freeze/thaw cycle can cause old pavement to crack so that it deteriorates quickly under the weight of traffic, and then streets seem to break out in potholes overnight. Work by the Pothole Rangers helps address any isolated trouble spots and prevents deterioration of the remaining street surface.

Citizens can report potholes by calling 206-684-ROAD (7623) or by reporting potholes online at <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/potholereport.htm>. Residents can track pothole requests outstanding and filled by visiting the City's pothole map at <http://web1.seattle.gov/SDOT/potholemap/>.

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