

# FACTS ABOUT POTHOLES

## POTHOLE RANGERS FILL POTHOLES

SDOT has trucks, called hotboxes, dedicated to filling potholes. The teams that take these trucks out to repair Seattle streets are called Pothole Rangers.

## HOW MANY POTHOLES ARE FILLED

The Pothole Rangers fill approximately 10,000 potholes each year. More than 5,000 pothole repair requests a year are submitted by the public.

Most potholes happen following periods of snow and ice or heavy rain. This table shows the number of potholes filled in recent months:

|              | <b>2016</b>   | <b>2017</b>   |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| January      | 2,541         | 2,781         |
| February     | 3,084         | 3,703         |
| March        | 3,104         | 6,080         |
| April        | 1,992         | *11,832       |
| May          | 1,180         | 4,107         |
| June         | 909           | 1,214         |
| July         | 654           | 879           |
| August       | 775           | 699           |
| September    | 727           | 549           |
| October      | 996           | 879           |
| November     | 1,800         | 1,123         |
| December     | 1,312         | 1,601         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>19,074</b> | <b>35,447</b> |

*\* In April 2017, SDOT allocated additional resources to fill potholes.*

## RANGERS FILL POTHOLES WITHIN THREE BUSINESS DAYS

The goal is to fill potholes within three business days, starting the morning after they are reported to SDOT. This does not include pavement defects that cannot be repaired as potholes.

## WHAT CAUSES A POTHOLE?

The Potholes occur when street pavement cracks and breaks because of water or traffic.

Water can get under the pavement through cracks or from the side of the road. Over time, the water can cause the material under the pavement to erode, causing the pavement to sink down and break. During the winter, the water under the pavement can freeze and expand, and then thaw and contract. This freeze/thaw cycle can cause the pavement to crack so that it deteriorates quickly under the weight of traffic, and then streets can seem to break out in potholes overnight.

Traffic that is too heavy for the pavement's design can result in cracks. Large volumes of traffic or heavy trucks and buses using a street not designed for this load can cause the pavement to crack and break apart.

## HOW MANY POTHOLES ARE FILLED

The long-term solution to potholes is to repave or reconstruct the street. Potholes will not usually form on pavement that is in good condition, that keeps water out from under the pavement, and that is designed for the type of traffic that uses it.

Thanks to the Levy to Move Seattle, SDOT plans to pave long stretches of arterials through the city in 2015-2024.