

POTHOLES

FACT &
FICTION



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FICTION

THERE ARE
NO POTHOLES
IN CONCRETE
PAVEMENT.

TORONTO
POTHOLES
ARE ASPHALT
FAILURES.

POTHOLES ARE
CAUSED BY THE
"GARBAGE" PUT INTO
THE ASPHALT
CEMENT.

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FACT

- Potholes result from water getting into the pavement and freezing.
- Potholes typically occur seven to ten years after a road is paved if it is not maintained properly. Repeated freeze and thaw cycles where water is allowed to pond on the pavement surface or seep into unsealed cracks lead to potholes.
- Concrete pavements develop cracks and surface spalls which develop into the full or partial failure of the concrete slab, which forms a hole. These holes are typically repaired with asphalt patches. When the distress to the slab is too great, it re-quires replacement of the slab which requires full lane closure of the affected lane and partial lane closure of at least one other lane for five to seven days to allow for removal of the existing slab and curing of the new slab to prevent cracking.
- The majority of roads in Toronto have a concrete base with 80 mm of asphalt over-lay to improve ride comfort and provide adequate skid resistance on wet pavement and during winter conditions. The concrete base is jointed at 3 m intervals to control the cracking of the concrete. The joints cause cracking of the asphalt over-lay within one to two years of placement. If these cracks are not sealed and maintained, potholes will form at the reflection cracks in the asphalt overlay.
- All asphalt cement used to build roads in Ontario meets the OPSS.MUNI 1101 specification, which means it meets mandated standards that undergo constant review and development. There is no "garbage" in Ontario's asphalt cement.
- The key to pothole prevention is to build a durable road with good drainage, adequate pavement thickness and tight longitudinal joints and to maintain that pavement over its 15 to 20 year life.
- If roads are designed and built for proper drainage and are well maintained to seal cracks, water will not get into the pavement and potholes will not occur.