



NEWS ADVISORY

March 1, 2013

For immediate release

City Takes a Proactive Approach to Pothole Season

The City of Missoula's asphalt recycler has produced 507 tons of hot-mix asphalt for patching potholes since our crews first fired it up in February 2012. What that means is

- Street Maintenance Division crews have been able to patch potholes year-round when weather permits, instead of having to wait until Missoula's asphalt plants are open in construction season;
- The City has saved approximately \$22,000 producing asphalt patching material instead of buying it;
- The material used to make the mix – chunks of old asphalt – stay out of the landfill;
- Developing potholes get attention as they start; and
- City crews can respond to citizen reports of potholes, usually within one shift and nearly always within 24 hours through the work week.

“It's given us the opportunity to patch potholes during the winter when the asphalt plants are not open, and it's given us a material that works better than the cold mix we were using,” said Street Superintendent Brian Hensel. “We're going into spring in better shape than in previous years, before we had the recycler.”

Looking toward spring, when freeze-thaw cycles start to show up as cracks and potholes in streets, a Street Division manager has driven city streets daily noting potholes and responding with crews. Crews take an organized approach and work on problem areas by zones in the city to cover all 311 miles of City streets.

Reports from citizens take priority. To report a pothole:

- Call 552-6360
- Visit the City of Missoula website at www.ci.missoula.mt.us and click on **AT YOUR SERVICE. Select Report a Pothole.**

A sound street maintenance program is the best defense against potholes. Potholes occur when moisture enters cracks in a street's asphalt surface and then expands with freezes. Multiple freeze-thaw cycles in recent winters have been an extra challenge. The City's annual Chip Seal Street Maintenance Program seals about

100 blocks of streets per year. Since the program began in 1987, City crews have sealed a majority of the streets, many sections multiple times.

For interviews, contact:

Brian Hensel, Street Superintendent

Office: 552-6361 Cell: 240-2742

#

Ginny Merriam, Public Information/Communications Director, 552-6007; 546-7692