



New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
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NMDOT Pavement Preservation for Roadway Surfaces

LAS VEGAS – As the New Mexico Department of Transportation moves into spring and summer operations, the opportunity to properly repair asphalt cracking and potholes will be addressed as daytime temperatures consistently stay above freezing.

During winter months New Mexico motorists see significant deterioration such as asphalt cracks and potholes, on many roadways throughout New Mexico. While typical deterioration is caused by vibration of vehicle tires over cracked and stressed pavement, the weight of traffic will also cause the pavement to sink, which in turn produces cracks and potholes. During the winter months freeze-thaw cycles further contribute to road deterioration.

Freeze- thaw is basically when temperatures fall below and rise above freezing (32°F). As roadway surfaces encounter rainwater or melting snowfall, this moisture finds its way through small cracks in the asphalt. This moisture begins to expand underneath the road surface and produces cracks in the asphalt which starts the process of cracking and the formation of potholes.

Throughout the winter months, the department utilizes a cold mix asphalt product to patch potholes providing a temporary fix until warmer temperatures allow for a pavement preservation project. Department blade patching operations are typically scheduled during the spring and summer months when hot mix asphalt is produced and can be properly applied to a roadway surface of 40°F and above. When it's warm, rubberized crack sealant material can be applied to asphalt surfaces to seal the cracks. When correctly applied and properly timed, the application of crack sealant will help reduce moisture infiltration, retain material strength, and reduce the potential for moisture-related distresses such as fatigue cracking and potholes.

As New Mexico continues to see rising daily temperatures, you can expect to see the Department of Transportation beginning multiple pavement preservation projects throughout the state. The department encourages motorists to utilize NMRoads.com, the official road advisory system for the State of New Mexico, to see where road construction operations will be taking place. The NMDOT will continue to provide a safe and efficient transportation system for the traveling public, and thanks all travelers for their continued patience and cooperation.

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