

Is it a pothole?

A hole in the road surface can be a pothole or a cave-in.

Potholes - no one likes them. They seem to pop up almost overnight. In reality potholes are created in a number of ways. The most common way is when water seeps into cracks in the surface of the road and, combined with the vibration of the tires over the cracks, causes the asphalt to fail. That is why there are more potholes after it rains. Potholes are also created when the roadway is stressed by trucks and buses, which can cause a movement of the subsurface. Once there is a weak spot, every car that travels over it makes the problem worse, and eventually a section of the material will fail, causing a pothole. Potholes are found on all roads, including major highways. Potholes that are an immediate hazard to motorists or pedestrians, are given primary attention.

POTHLES are openings that occur when the top layer or asphalt surface of the roadway has worn away, exposing the base.

CAVE-INS (sometimes called sinkholes) are holes that reach past the base of the roadway. This void can occur when the dirt below the base has washed away, causing the upper surfaces to fall through.

HINTS FOR SPEEDY SERVICE CALLS

To help expedite your service request, please be prepared with specific information when you contact the Customer Service Unit (734-240-5102):

- Give your name, complete address and telephone number
- Give the exact location (name of road, section of road between what two major roads, north/south/east/west side of the road, etc.)
- Be prepared to describe the hole
- Is the hole on the roadway or shoulder portion of the roadway?
- Size (approximate length/width/depth)



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Explaining How Soils Affect Road Construction



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BAD SOIL...

How Do Soils Affect Road Construction



The Monroe County Road Commission (MCRC) is committed to finding solutions—not excuses. Sometimes the solutions are too expensive to fix the problem. That is the

case many times when it comes to addressing the soil content beneath county roads. The MCRC receives calls and questions from county residents regarding the condition of the roads. Often people will comment that the roads in other states are better. It is true that Michigan roads fall into the bottom half of improved roadways in the U.S. This is mainly the result of under funding, which is covered in the MCRC Funding informational brochure.



However, weather cycles, freeze/thaw season, the measure of precipitation, climate, proximity to Lake Erie and type of soils also make Monroe County distinct to other areas of the country.



Road in Monroe County—depicts inadequate drainage. Water on roadway promotes damage (freezing and thawing).

Soils, flat topography, and drainage are all very crucial factors that affect the life of road pavement. The description of the soil classification in Monroe County is “very poorly drained, slowly permeable clay composition on lake plains”.

...equals...

Building a road on soils that drain poorly adds to the cost and may shorten the life of the roadway. Additional stone must be used in building the base, additional time may be necessary to remove the moisture, and additional steps may be required in the process. All of this adds additional dollars to the cost of building and maintaining roads in Monroe County as compared to other counties and states.



The soil beneath existing roadways is also a major factor in routine maintenance, and pothole eruption. If the road base holds water, the weight of the vehicles continually causes the road to move. Eventually this stress will cause cracks in the pavement.

If water is held in the cracks or in the base, freezing and thawing will cause potholes to erupt.

When you drive in other areas and notice a difference in the condition of roads, think about these factors: the soil conditions, climate, and amount of precipitation. They play a big part in the type of roadway constructed, cost of road construction, and the life of a roadway.



...BAD ROADS.



Depicts road built on unstable soils.



Depicts road breaking apart due to inadequate base and soil materials.



Depicts road failure due to poor soil and topography that cannot be fixed with routine maintenance.



Depicts damage done to edge of road from vehicles traveling on the shoulder portion of the road.



Depicts inadequate drainage and base, which results in alligatoring and rutting.

