



MTA Press Releases

Select Language | ▼

Press Release

March 15, 2011

[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

Mother Nature Keeping MTA Crews and RoadPatcher Trucks Busy

Getting an early jump on spring paving repairs, MTA Bridges and Tunnels crews have already filled more than 4,000 potholes on the roadways, toll plazas and exit and entrance ramps at its seven bridges and two tunnels. The prolific crop of potholes is a result of a particularly harsh winter.

"We've been very aggressive in dealing with potholes this season," said MTA Bridges and Tunnels Chief Maintenance Officer Patrick Parisi. "As soon as we see them, we've been sending road crews and our RoadPatcher trucks out to fill them."

The odd-looking, self-contained RoadPatcher truck can fill up to 100 potholes in a single eight-hour shift using a repair method called spray-injection patching. The RoadPatcher operator eases the vehicle's trunk-like nozzle into the pothole, cleans it out using a high-powered blast of air and then alternately fills it with hot emulsion, asphalt and dry stone aggregate _ all without ever leaving the cab of the truck. Once filled, motorists can immediately drive on the newly-patched surface. (Check out this 2010 MTA video of the RoadPatcher in action at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18QFxzGXt5c>).

The repair season usually doesn't begin until the beginning of March, but the repeat snow, rain and ice storms throughout the months of December and January, which dumped nearly 47 inches of snow and nearly 8 inches of rain throughout the city, created an unusually large and earlier-than-usual bumper crop of potholes.

From Dec. 26th through March 15th, crews have used more than 6,000 gallons of liquid emulsion asphalt, 100 tons of stone aggregate, 400 tons of hot asphalt and 16 tons of cold patch mix to fix potholes, Parisi said. He said repairs are primarily done in off-peak hours to minimize the impact on traffic, and a backup truck is always used to ensure the safety of motorists and B&T employees.

Potholes occur when water and snow seeps into concrete and asphalt, solidifies and expands, causing cracks that continue to widen as vehicles travel over them. Each time a freeze-and-thaw cycle occurs, potholes are likely to form.

More substantial potholes are handled by teams of workers called Hot Box crews, named for the container where the 180-degree asphalt is kept. Using shovels and power tools, workers clear loose debris from the potholes, fill it with asphalt and a heavy roller is used to smooth over the filled in pothole. .

MTA Bridges and Tunnels nine facilities include the Bronx-Whitestone, Verrazano-Narrows, Throgs Neck, Henry Hudson, Robert F. Kennedy, Cross Bay Veterans Memorial and Marine Parkway-Gil Hodges Memorial Bridges, and the Brooklyn-Battery and Queens Midtown Tunnels.



MTA Bridges and Tunnels' RoadPatcher truck, which can fill as many as 100 potholes in a single shift, working at the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge.

