



Year Round Permanent Pothole Repairs...

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The street division will soon unveil its latest maintenance tool designed to make pothole repairs an art instead of a chore. The Flameless Pothole Patcher is a powerful maintenance tool in itself, but the street division has made it more unique by placing it on a hook lift truck which will combine three pieces of equipment into one. Street division crews received instructions on how to use the patcher from Bergkamp, Inc. last month. The machine will keep hot mix asphalt hot for up to four days and has all the tools needed to make a permanent patch that will last.

The crew learned to use the hydraulic jackhammer used to cut the pavement. The pavement surrounding the pothole is cut square a distance far enough from the hole to get into good pavement. This takes only a few minutes to accomplish. The loose material is then removed from the hole and loaded into the debris box on the truck. The cut is then swept clean of any loose material.

The next step is the removal of any dust left in the cut. This is accomplished by compressed air, which is obtained by an air compressor located on the truck. The cut is then primed with cutback asphalt to insure a bond of the new asphalt to the existing pavement. The primer emulsion is contained on the truck. Hot asphalt material is then taken off the truck and placed into the cut. The removal of the asphalt material can be augured directly into the cut from the truck or shoveled from the material platform into the cut.

The hot material is then leveled into place before compacting. When leveling a patch, the material must not be overworked or segregation of the aggregate material and binder can occur. Also, the material must be left high enough to allow the finished patch to be level with the surrounding pavement after compaction. The material is then compacted tightly into place. A vibratory roller is used to accomplish the task. This roller is also a part of the Pothole Patcher tools contained on the truck. The final results show a professional patch, smooth under traffic, and a patch that will last for years.

The street division's investment is an excellent addition to the city's pavement maintenance fleet. Its use will be seen not only by the citizens of St Joseph, but also by the city's pavement management system, which will show a reduction in recurring potholes.