



New Machine Makes Pothole Fixing Easier

**Article by Jessica Levco, writer for *News Chief* newspaper
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WINTER HAVEN - Fixing a pothole in Winter Haven has gotten a whole lot easier. With the city's new Bergkamp flameless pothole patcher truck, a two person street crew can repair a pothole in about 25 minutes. The truck has been in service for three weeks and has filled 20 potholes, so far.

"Potholes are caused by wear and tear on a road," Joe Hamric, the city's streets and cemetery superintendent said. "The lime rock base underneath the asphalt gives out."

Previously, street crews had to use a flat bed truck with one ton of hot mix in it. Equipment for fixing a pothole was carried in a trailer behind the truck. Four people were needed to fill a pothole and it usually took about 30 to 45 minutes to fill the hole. With the new truck, six tons of hot mix are kept constantly warm at 300 degrees. This material is used to fill in the pothole.

First, a hydraulic pavement breaker cuts a square edge in the pothole for a permanent patch. Then, the hot mix is dumped from the chute into the pothole. After it's filled, it is compacted by a vibrating compactor.

"This truck will pay for itself because it's efficient," Hamric said.

Hamric said it usually takes between one and two days to get a pothole fixed. He said if residents see a pothole they want filled, call 863-291-5852.