



FACT SHEET – 2011 SPRING HIGHWAY CONDITIONS

What will be done to fix potholes and problem areas this season?

- Data is used from the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority and Ministry historical experience to predict highways that will most likely be impacted by spring run off.
- A surveillance program enables crews to quickly provide warning to motorists and provide short-term repairs. This includes using the Highway Hotline as a centralized point of contact for the general public and municipalities to report trouble spots.
- Priority is placed on clearing culverts, bridges and other drainage structures so that they can handle runoff at their design capacity.
- Extra measures this spring to prepare for potential flooding includes:
 - ensuring additional equipment and bridge replacement components have been ordered or are on standby, to ensure quick restoration of highways and bridges;
 - assembling emergency repair trailers throughout the province;
 - re-deploying staff from drier areas of the province if necessary.

How soon will repairs be made?

- When surface breaks occur in the spring, highway crews flag the hazard and do an assessment of what kind of repair is needed.
- The crew may apply gravel material or blade on asphalt patching material as a temporary repair, but crews **MUST** wait until the road dries before attempting long-term repairs.
- This spring, the priority for crews will be to clear culverts, maintain drainage runs and direct traffic through or around flood zones.
- Highways that require permanent repairs will be scheduled into the summer work plan for the crew.
- Crews prioritize their work by highway classification - repairs on the most heavily-travelled highways will be scheduled first.

Why are there potholes and surface breaks in the spring?

- Potholes are formed from the expansion and contraction of water that has entered into the subsurface of the road through cracks in the pavement. When water freezes it expands causing the pavement to expand, bend or crack.
- Thin Membrane Surface (TMS) roads can be very sensitive to break up in the spring, as these highways do not have the same structural strength as paved highways.
- If large volumes of water adjacent to the road bed take a long time to recede, more surface breaks are expected.

For the latest spring road conditions, contact the Highway Hotline:

