

It's beginning to look a lot like pothole season

BY **JAMES CLARK**
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(McMinnville, Tennessee)

If you feel like you're playing dodgeball with potholes, you're not alone.

It's pothole season in Tennessee. Winter weather extremes have led to an increase in potholes on state highways and bridges.

According to TDOT officials, potholes form when

moisture seeps into cracks in the pavement, then freezes and thaws causing the cracks to expand.

The constant pounding of traffic loosens the pavement which causes it to crumble and create potholes.

Severe swings in temperature followed by periods of rain are the perfect conditions for widespread potholes to form.

Weather permitting,

TDOT crews all over the state are patching potholes on a daily basis.

During winter months, TDOT typically relies on a "cold mix" asphalt as a temporary fix. Now that the weather is getting warmer and "hot mix" asphalt plants are beginning to operate, TDOT will be able to perform more permanent repairs.

TDOT estimates it spent approximately \$5.2 million on statewide pothole repair from July 1, 2017 through March 11, 2018.

TDOT officials ask motorists to keep safety in mind when approaching road work.

That means moving over and slowing down. Tennessee state law requires motorists to move over or slow down for emergency, maintenance and construction vehicles or face a fine of up to \$500.

To report a pothole on a Tennessee interstate or state route, visit www.tn.gov/content/tn/tdot/maintenance/potholes.html.



Potholes can be a big problem on Tennessee roadways this time of year. Large potholes can be reported to TDOT for repair.

On that website you'll find answers to frequently asked questions, including how to report a pothole and how to file a damage claim with the Division of Claims Administration, an agency not associated with TDOT.

Please note your written notice of claim to the Division of Claims Administration should include any facts and details that are relevant to the claim.

You must also provide documentation to support your request for damages.

Travelers can also dial 511 from any phone for travel information. However, this should be done before beginning

your trip.

Drivers should never tweet, text or talk on a cell-phone while behind the wheel.

In 2016, the Tennessee Department of Transportation lost three workers in the line of duty.

All three were struck by passing motorists. Those tragedies bring the total number of TDOT lives lost to 112.

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Students set to march Saturday

NEW YORK (AP) — Students from the Florida high school where 17

people were fatally shot last month expect more than 1 million participants in upcoming marches in Washington and elsewhere calling for gun regulations, students said Monday.

More than 800 March for Our Lives demonstrations are planned around the world Saturday, sparked by the Feb. 14 shooting in Parkland, Florida.

"It just shows that the youth are tired of being the generation where we're locked in closets and waiting for police to come in case of a shooter," Alex Wind, a junior at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, told The Associated Press.

"We're sick and tired of having to live with this normalcy of turning on the news and watching a mass shooting," he added.

Since the massacre, Stoneman Douglas students have been at the forefront of a push to tighten gun restrictions and protect schools.

They have led rallies and lobbied lawmakers in Washington and Florida's capital, Tallahassee.

Last Wednesday, tens of thousands of students around the U.S. walked out of their classrooms to demand action on gun violence and school safety.

Stoneman Douglas students fanned out Monday to discuss the marches with media outlets in New York, including NBC's "Today" show and "CBS This Morning."

Amid the wave of activism, Florida passed a law curbing young people's access to rifles.

The NRA has sued to try to block it.

Some major U.S. retailers decided to curb the sale of assault-style rifles or stop selling firearms to people younger than 21.

But Congress has shown little appetite for new gun regulations.

Beyond making a statement, Saturday's marches aim to make political change by registering and mobilizing people to vote.

But the students insist their aim isn't partisan: "We're just trying to make sure that morally just people are running this country," Stoneman Douglas senior Ryan Deitsch told the AP.

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