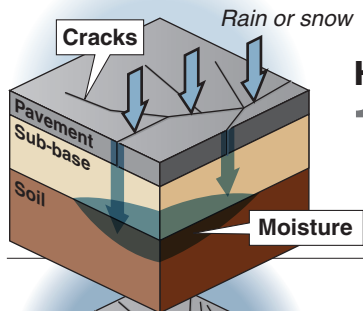


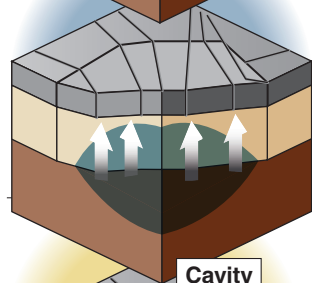
What makes a pothole?

The common culprits: water, temperature extremes and the pounding of vehicle tires.

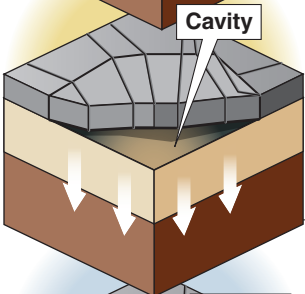


How it happens

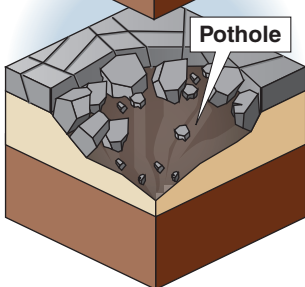
1 Rain or snow seeps into the pavement, often through small cracks in the road surface and saturates the sub-base and soil below



2 During cold spells the moisture freezes and the ground expands, pushing up and breaking the road surface



3 When temperatures rise, the ground contracts to its normal level, but the fractured and raised road surface is weakened by the cavity and the ground below



4 This damaged road surface cannot support the weight of passing vehicles and begins to break down and collapse into the hollow space

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Graphic: Sue-Lyn Erbeck, David Jahntz and Rick Tuma, Chicago Tribune