



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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ORDER

WHEREAS, The single most consistent service complaints are the burgeoning number of potholes that appear on street surfaces throughout Chicago after every freeze-thaw weather cycle; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago Department of Transportation wages a seemingly endless battle with these menaces to motorists. The preferred method of repair has been what is known as hot patch, an asphalt blend that is prepared at an asphalt plant and kept at a temperature above 175 degrees, ideally between 275-300 degrees, while it is applied to the pothole. This method allows for effective binding with the street surface and, once it cools and hardens, it solidifies it's bond with the surrounding area's asphalt; and

WHEREAS, This hot patch method isn't practicable during Chicago's cold months so a temporary solution of plugging the holes with cold patch, an asphalt mixture that contains oils that keep the asphalt soft enough to use but it also makes the material too soft to be permanent. If a more permanent resurfacing is not undertaken, future freeze-thaw cycles will loosen the patch allowing the material to be knocked out, only to create a bigger pothole; and

WHEREAS, Observers who are experts on the subject of asphalt repair have questioned why CDOT has continued to use cold patch to fill potholes throughout the warm months when hot patch could have been applied. Not doing so may have wasted thousands of dollars in materials as well as the labor of the army of city workers who have diligently tried to address this vexing problem; now therefore it is

ORDERED, The Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Transportation is hereby authorized and directed to prepare and present a briefing for members of the City of Chicago City Council on the status of this city's pothole war and the reason cold patch continued to be used during the months when the preferred method of pothole repair could have been applied.

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