



DIANA DICKINSON
pio@rogerscounty.org
Rogers County Public Information Officer
200 S. Lynn Riggs Blvd., Claremore, Oklahoma 74017

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Pothole patch truck makes debut

A new pothole patch truck in District 3 is already proving to be a key investment for the county by saving money, time, and manpower.

The truck purchased this year for \$264,000 -- after meeting the Rogers County Board of County Commissioners' approval during an earlier board meeting -- has hit the pavement almost every day since it was delivered on October 12.

District 3 Commissioner Ron Burrows said this is a step away from the three-man crew needed for cold patching. "This truck can be used during mildly cold weather, taking only one crew member to operate without ever having to leave the cab," he said.

Operating from the cab is safer, in addition to keeping the public safe by alerting them with the truck's warning lights, instead of a traffic flagger.

A touchscreen control module found in the cab shows effortless steps for the operator to follow for the patching process. It also allows the operator to see almost everything such as oil temperature and a way to control configurable material output -- among other things.

It uses three critical ingredients for an effective repair. It uses a frontal mechanical arm discharging hot compressed air to clean and dry the pothole before sealing the bottom with emulsified asphalt. The pothole is then filled with layers of emulsion and aggregate (rock) before it is capped with dry aggregate. Then, it is ready for traffic in minutes, making it less disruptive.

On a road that is more heavily traveled, Burrows said crews will still use the asphalt hot box system, which will heat both hot and cold mix asphalt patching material.

The new truck will not replace cold patching, he said. "It is just another method that's been added to our road repair inventory." This method is perfect for chip sealed roads since it uses the same composition, he added.

Another notable feature is that it can be used most of the year.

He said by repairing potholes and other major road distresses like alligator or spider cracking, it increases the longevity of roads before reaching the point of total reconstruction, saving the county thousands of dollars.