



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards

Safety Requirements when Patching Potholes

TO: Public Sector Employers in Massachusetts
FROM: Workplace Safety & Health Program
DATE: March 25, 2026
RE: Worker Safety Requirements when Patching Potholes

The Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards requires the following practices to prevent work-related injuries during pothole patching:

1. Set up a Work Zone to Protect Workers from Traffic

- See [MUTCD](#) for sample diagrams of short duration and mobile work zones.
MUTCD Part 6G.02.02
- Use advance warning signs to warn motorists. MUTCD Part 6G.02.15,19
- Mobile operations shall have traffic control devices on the equipment (high-intensity rotating, flashing, oscillating, or special lighting) or provide a separate vehicle with such warning devices. MUTCD Part 6.G.02.22
- Do not allow workers to stand in an active lane of traffic. OSHA General Duty Clause

2. Provide Personal Protective Clothing (PPE) to employees

- ANSI Class II or Class III retro-reflective hi-vis vests or shirts. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(1)
- ANSI Class E hi-vis pants in addition to vests for the following:
low-light conditions and work roads with speeds of 50 mph and greater. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(1)
- Work Gloves, Safety Glasses and Safety-Toe Shoes. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(1)

3. Follow Owner's Manual when Cleaning the Asphalt Hopper

- Do not use kerosene, diesel, or other flammable chemicals on hot surfaces.
There are several non-flammable, non-toxic release agents available. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1200(e)(1)(ii) and 1910.1200(h)(1)

Contact the DLS SafetyWorks Program for free technical assistance [here](#), at safepublicworkplacemailbox@mass.gov, or (508) 616-0461 Option 1.