Anatomy of a Pothole

1. Potholes start to form when moisture such as rain or snow trickles into cracks and gets under the pavement. Cracks are small at first.

2. As temperatures drop, water in the cracks expands, making the rift larger and providing space for more moisture to collect during future thaws.

3. With temperature changes from freeze to thaw, more water collects under the surface. When this water freezes it expands, pushing the weakened pavement up and exposing it.

4. Once the ice melts, a space is left in the pavement. The weakened pavement can then crumble under the pressure of plows, salt, and heavy truck traffic.