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It's all-out hole-y war on potholes

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There's nothing like a crater-sized pothole to raise the ire of even the most mild-mannered Sydney car owner.

The trouble is, the current crop of potholes is making our roads more like a lunar landscape after weeks of road-destroying record rainfall.

There has to be a better way to deal with the pothole menace and it appears that Australia is at the forefront of developing self-healing road surfaces.

One ingenious method tested in Sydney's outer reaches includes having a bacteria in the road mixture that produces limestone to fill water-induced cracks. But in the meantime, the problem just seems to get worse and more costly.

Greater Sydney's 33 local councils have a huge backlog of pothole repairs running into hundreds of millions of dollars.

The bill can only have increased and NRMA callouts to punctured tyres and broken wheel rims tell the story of a wet winter of motoring discontent.

As every car owner knows, many potholes are repeat performers. It only takes another spell of rain for them to make an encore appearance.

While new technology is cause for optimism, the immediate reality is that councils are struggling under the weight of pothole repair bills.

Greater Sydney's road network is too important to leave to piecemeal fixes and endless backlogs.

Premier Chris Minns and Roads Minister Jenny Aitchison must find additional funding to help councils repair potholes as soon as possible.

Swift investment now will not only restore safer driving, but also save taxpayers from much larger costs.

Business Sydney doesn't pretend to be an expert on road repair but we are fascinated by emerging technology solutions.

Self-healing asphalt has an almost "too good to be true" sound about it.

One method uses steel fibres or steel wool mixed in the road surface to act as a "healing agent".

When cracks appear, a machine is passed over the road surface to heat the encased steel fibres, which in turn melts the asphalt, filling the cracks in the process.

Sydney drivers will say, let's have more of those roads that can heal themselves.

Paul Nicolaou is executive director of Business Sydney