



Drainage & Ditching

DRAINAGE OVERVIEW

Proper drainage is essential to protecting both the road surface and the underlying layers from water damage and saturation. In fact, maintaining effective drainage is one of the most important forms of preventative maintenance MCRC performs.

Throughout the spring, summer, and fall, MCRC works to ensure proper drainage across four primary areas:

- **Roadways**
- **Shoulders**
- **Ditches**
- **Culverts**

SERVICE REQUESTS

To submit a service request, visit muskegoncountyroads.org and click "Service Request" on the homepage. Prefer to call? Reach us at 231-788-2381.

While the causes of poor drainage vary, the results are often the same – flooding, washouts, and potholes that lead to costly repairs. Standing water on roadways can also create serious safety hazards for motorists, including hydroplaning and reduced traction.

To address these risks, MCRC utilizes a wide range of equipment and maintenance practices to manage water flow and protect roadways and surrounding infrastructure.

GRAVEL ROADS

Unlike paved roads, gravel roads require regular maintenance to ensure proper drainage and minimize rutting, or the formation of sandholes/potholes.

Gravel surfaces naturally deteriorate over time due to normal traffic, loss of aggregate material, winter snow removal operations, rainfall, and even wind wash from passing vehicles.

Using seven road graders, MCRC restores an optimal 4% crown to gravel road surfaces. This reshaping process eliminates surface irregularities, including sandholes/potholes, and improves drainage – helping extend the life of the roadway and slow future deterioration.

Questions? Contact the MCRC at (231) 788-2381



CULVERTS

Culverts are a critical part of roadside drainage, allowing water to flow beneath roadways and preventing erosion along the roadbed. MCRC maintains approximately 1,800 culverts throughout Muskegon County and partners with local townships on culvert repairs along the local road system.

Properly functioning culverts help extend the life of the road by preventing flooding, potholes, edge deterioration, and even roadway collapse. MCRC repairs and replaces primary road culverts based on priority, addressing safety hazards first. Concrete culverts are typically used to replace metal ones due to their longer service life and cost-effectiveness.

MCRC RESPONSIBILITIES

MCRC provides a number of routine maintenance services on paved and unpaved roadways to prevent damage to the roadway and underlying base material.

MCRC is responsible for maintaining drainage that runs parallel to roadways. Drains located within yards or fields fall under the responsibility of the Drain Commission or the property owner. Residents are also responsible for maintaining their own driveway culverts.

Roadside ditches play a vital role in preventing roadway and lawn flooding. MCRC urges residents not to fill ditches with lawn material or debris that can block drainage. Trees and shrubs should not be planted near ditches, as they restrict water flow and create safety hazards. All plantings must be at least 33 feet from the center of the road.

