



plaintiff's incident during the one-week period preceding the January 4, 2005, property damage event.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

{¶6} Defendant has the duty to keep roads in a safe, drivable condition. *Amica Mutual v. Dept. of Transportation* (1982), 81-02289-AD.

{¶7} In order to recover on a claim of this type, plaintiff must prove either: 1) defendant had actual or constructive notice of the defect (pothole) and failed to respond in a reasonable time or responded in a negligent manner, or 2) that defendant, in a general sense, maintains its highways negligently. *Denis v. Department of Transportation* (1976), 75-0287-AD.

{¶8} There is no evidence defendant had actual notice of the damage-causing pothole.

{¶9} The trier of fact is precluded from making an inference of defendant's constructive notice, unless evidence is presented in respect to the time the defective condition (pothole) developed. *Spires v. Highway Department* (1988), 61 Ohio Misc. 2d 262.

{¶10} Size of the defect (pothole) is insufficient to show notice or duration of existence. *O'Neil v. Department of Transportation* (1988), 61 Ohio Misc. 2d 297.

{¶11} In order for there to be constructive notice, plaintiff must show sufficient time has elapsed after the dangerous condition (pothole) appears, so that under the circumstances, defendant should have acquired knowledge of its existence. *Guiher v. Jackson* (1978), 78-0126-AD.

{¶12} No evidence has shown defendant had constructive notice of the pothole.

{¶13} Furthermore, plaintiff has failed to show defendant negligently maintained the roadway.





Case No. 2005-01331-AD

- 5 -

MEMORANDUM DECISION

Sent to S.C. reporter 4/29/05