

JANUARY - APRIL 2013

THE TRACKER

THE PUBLICATION FOR TIRE PROFESSIONALS
FROM WESTERN CANADA TIRE DEALERS

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Matt White Shows How

Closing the U.S. Price Gap

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WHEN'S THE BEST TIME to book your tech's next training session? NOW!

By: Andy Nagy, WCTD Executive Director



Access to current and **professionally delivered training** is a vital part of the myriad benefits you have access to as a WCTD member. Take a look at our **Training Calendar**—on our website, under the members section—which shows the dates and locations of courses planned. These are level 400 courses, which makes them the **highest obtainable certificate** from TIA.

This year we had planned to offer an **Earthmover** (OTR) Trainer Course. This course is only available as a Tech Course, **Matt White** from TIA had agreed to team-up with WCTD to offer this as a more extensive session; especially as the need for qualified trainers and technicians is growing significantly.

However, despite the widely reported demand—due to early low enrolment (insufficient numbers to cover our costs), we have been obliged to **postpone** it until further notice. The **Commercial Tire Service** (CTS) Program for March 12 - 14 in Saskatoon is going ahead as planned.

The **Automotive Tire Service** (ATS) Program originally scheduled for Calgary in March has been rescheduled for September 10 - 12.

If you **consider the consequences** of a workplace incident, all these courses are a must for any business. We strongly believe that by offering these training programs in Western Canada we are making it **extremely cost-effective** to attend. Talk to anyone who's participated or put their staff through them and they'll tell you just how invaluable and comprehensive these courses are.

More information is available by contacting the office.

As you may know, WCTD's office has **moved to Calgary**—Umm, that was in 2009! Former Executive Director **Don Blythe** is still getting mail for us and I owe him several cold refreshments! Thanks Don for forwarding the mail. Maybe a friendly reminder to the accounting department would be in order to confirm the change: Here's the "new" address to pass along: **PO Box 58047**,



Chaparral RPO, Calgary, AB T2X 3V2.

Our **website** is slowly changing. We are undergoing some additions and deletions so that accessing information is more relevant. We will be adding a **"Hall of Fame"** section and a tab for **Safety & Education**. We are also offering banner ads to help offset some of our costs. If you have any suggestions please don't hesitate to send them along. We will be posting some short paragraphs

that will link back to the article in *The Tracker*. However, we will be still publishing the print version of **The Tracker**, growing our **Twitter** base (Are you following us?) and, in general, using the Web to reach more members.

I still find it amusing when I'm following someone that has a low tire—and they're probably not aware. Too bad they don't get their vehicle serviced by **one of our dealers**, as it's only a matter of time before they'll have a real problem on their hands.

I recently read an article about the possibility of **retread passenger / light truck tires** coming back into the market. In the early 50s there was a process of taking the casing and applying new tread. The commercial industry is using retreads and extending the life of the tire, while reducing the cost and lowering the impact on the environment, with great success. With all the recycling programs coming on stream, I have my doubts that a retread PLT Tire will be viable. We will wait and see!

At the **Global Tire Expo** this past year, I was amazed at all the different manufacturers and wheel sizes, (which I used to see when I was in the trucking industry)! Now they have them for the consumer market. Our dealers must pull their hair out trying to keep inventory and remain knowledgeable about all this! As for the 'sport' of drifting, that'll use supplies up quicker than you can say *Fast & Furious 6!* — Andy Nagy



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MEET YOUR BOARD!

Clem Collet, Manitoba Director
West End Tire, Winnipeg

Behind the scenes of the Association, your volunteer Board of Directors works tirelessly to make this a better, more effective organization. We felt it was time to introduce the people who give so freely of their time and will be profiling them in coming issues of *The Tracker*.

Can you start by telling us a little about yourself and how you came to be in the business?

West End Tire is our family's business, owned by my parents. I got into it 13 years ago, in 2000, and I started right out of school. At the time I didn't really know what I wanted to do but I did want to get into the family business. I thought I could work maybe here and also on our farm.

I didn't think I'd like an office job coming from a farming background. My dad said to try it out for six months and "see what you think". Here we are 13 years later—so I guess it's good!

What sort of work were you doing?

I started in the retread plant, putting tires in the molds and then moved to the sales counter. I had worked a little bit here and there during spring break, for example unloading tires. One winter I worked with the construction crew on our expansion. But I definitely started at the bottom, that's for sure! And that's OK. I went from counter sales to eventually working as service manager for our head office location in Winnipeg. Later on I went into purchasing and marketing and soon I was helping out all over.

Clem moved to Calgary for almost a year in 2008-9, when West End opened their store there but moved back to Winnipeg as part of a management reorganization to become the official marketing manager and purchasing agent.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

I've always really enjoyed purchasing. I went to college for two years and majored in marketing. But I have always been drawn to purchasing. I can't really explain why. I just get a kick out of managing inventory and trying to find the right levels, making sure we have the right tires in stock. The better we can manage our inventory, the better it is for the company but also the customer benefits because we can sell at a better price.

We carry several hundred SKUs. We stock OTR, medium truck (wide base and so on), light truck, as well as in specialised products—so well over 200 different sizes.

Does the farming background help you in that sector?

Absolutely! Not only for farm tires but for medium truck tires as well,

because we were also involved in the gravel crushing business and had a trucking company. So, I grew up changing tires, using those tires and driving trucks (which I've done since I was 12!).

I fully understand the challenges that customers face when they're buying truck tires or specialised tires for tractors or combines.

When it comes to making major decisions as to what to buy—especially for farming, when you're not using that equipment year round—it's a big expense. And you need to get the best bang for your buck. I definitely understand what people are looking for and—yes—my background helps me a lot because I can relate to customers what they need. You can gain a lot of ground when you share from your own experience and can say "This is what we use on our equipment". As a testimonial, it gives you a lot of clout.

What's the biggest change you've noticed in the last 10 years or so?

I really notice the competitiveness. Every year it seems to get a little bit harder to earn new business and retain the business you have. Whether it's because someone has a new product, or upping the service levels, it seems there is somebody offering the same service or products more cheaply. Every year your competitors will try to do something a little bit better than the year before. You have no choice but to keep up.

What would you like to see the Association do better?

For my personal goal as a director, I would like to improve the professional life of our members in regards to the services we offer, from a business standpoint.

Of all the benefits that we do offer what is the most effective that could be made more use of?

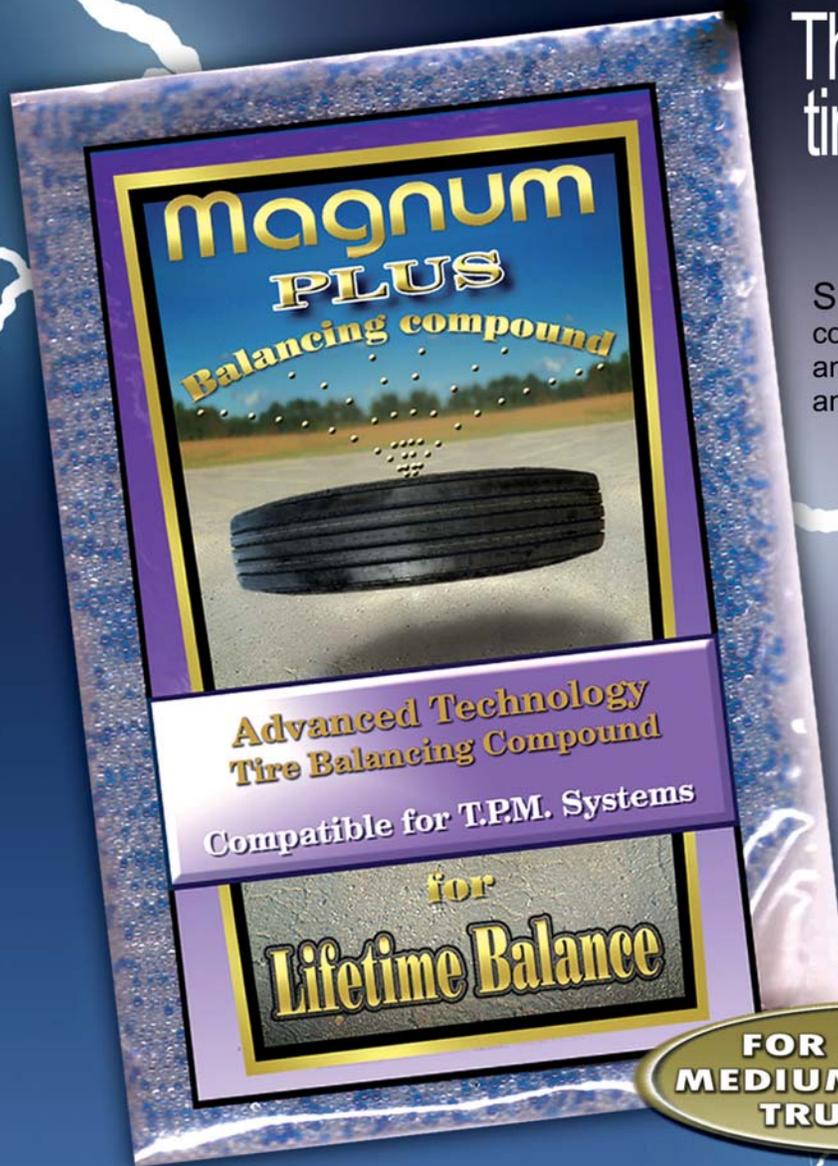
I have to say I am a big fan of the training that's being offered right now. I don't think we put enough emphasis on the skill it takes in order to work in our industry. The training seminars put on in different areas are one of the biggest draws we have to offer. It really is very important that everyone learns to do their job properly, because this industry is dangerous—and you can never put enough emphasis on safety.

Thank you!

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TPMS to the Rescue

By: *Tim Pawsey, Editor, The Tracker*

As a full-time writer, I tend not to drive the latest and most luxurious of cars. In fact, I'll confess the vehicles in our family stable boast some 50 years between them. Although, no question—a super solid Camry and the last VW GTI Rabbit built (that can still hop circles around many a younger upstart)—they enjoy no shortage of pedigree.

Once in awhile though, I do get to drive some pretty fancy rides, including, most recently the 2013 Acura RDX Tech.

We took a sleek, metallic silver RDX through the impossibly picturesque mountains of BC's Highway 3 (the Crowsnest) for a working weekend in the Okanagan. Along for the ride was a full load of music stands and other concert paraphernalia for a performance of Canadian new music (by my wife's Astrolabe Musik Theatre) at the spectacular Summerhill Pyramid winery. The concert, as well as the ride, was an undisputed success. And, once home, dutifully toasted with a bottle of Summerhill's excellent Cipes Brut.

I drove a similar Acura RDX model last year, when I put it through its paces more by way of researching the GPS system as an effective means to find well hidden wineries throughout the valley. This time, it was the vehicle's remarkable responsive V6 power and firm distinctly Germanic feeling handling that impressed me—along with the TPMS.

Much has been written (not all of it complimentary) about the trials of TPMS—Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems—with which, of course, this vehicle is equipped.

As do most, I suspect, we gave it no second thought. I was too busy flipping the paddles to easily downshift through hairpin curves and watching the helpful on-board thermometer tell me how close the road surface was to freezing to be concerned about TPMS.

However, the night before our return trip, on came the orange warning light. It told me very specifically that the front left tire was under-inflated. Given the volumes I've read over the last few years regarding inefficiencies and idiosyncrasies of TPMS, I gazed at the solid orange glow with a modicum of skepticism. But I did make a mental note to check the tire's pressure the very next

morning, especially considering we'd be negotiating those same hairpins back, even if for the most part on the inside and not on the outside looking down into 500 metre ravines!

When I gassed up, I did check the pressures. Lo and behold, the TPMS-flagged tire was quite soft. And although the gauge (for which I had paid a dollar for the privilege of using) was well-nigh impossible to read precisely, I could see that it was significantly under-inflated. Checking all the tires, I took my dollar's worth of air right there. At least, I think I did. And then we were back on the road.

However, more importantly, I had been alerted to take the time to ascertain that there was not a more serious problem with the tire that might have resulted in being stranded on a narrow winding road (or worse) and being forced to change a tire in a potentially dangerous situation.

I'm not one to toss aside the frustrations and challenges which the system may have presented to many. But wearing my layman's consumer hat, I can tell you that knowing I had an on-board system—which had already proven its point by telling me I should address a potential safety risk—whilst putting this sporty unit through its paces on BC's mountain passes delivered a most welcome peace of mind.

Why anyone would want to disconnect such a genuinely useful piece of technology, truly, is beyond me.



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BE (VERY) WARY OF POSSIBLE ZIPPER RUPTURES

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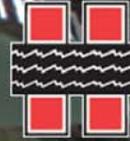
By: Matt White, TIA Director of Tire Service

- 1 One of the biggest dangers that a tire technician faces on commercial truck tires is what is known as a Zipper Rupture—defined as a break in the steel belts on the sidewall due to being in an under-inflated and / or overloaded condition.
- 2 Any tire suspected of operating under-inflated and / or overloaded must be approached with extreme caution! Permanent damage due to operating a tire under-inflated and/or overloaded cannot always be detected.
- 3 Ply cords weakened by under-inflation and / or overloading may break on the sidewall, causing an extreme rupture to occur in the side wall. The instantaneous air loss releases with such explosive force that if you are in the trajectory zone it could cause serious injury or death.
- 4 If any radial light truck or commercial truck tire upon an air pressure check is found to be 80 percent or less of the operating pressure it must be immediately deflated. Write the pressure on the sidewall to indicate the tire could potentially have a zipper rupture and must be removed from the vehicle, dismounted from the rim, and that a proper inspection must be performed.
- 5 After removing the tire from the rim, perform the following inspections: LOOK for punctures and / or other injuries, distortions or undulations, ripples, bulges, plus any cuts, snags or chips that expose any body ply cords or steel wires. FEEL for any soft spots in the sidewall flex area, as well as any distortions or undulations and keep feeling for anything indicating broken body cords.
- 6 Any wrinkles or discolourations of the inner lining in the flex area on the sidewall is a really good sign of a tire being operated under-inflated and / or overloaded.
- 7 If a tire is found to have any of these conditions it must be immediately removed from service. If it is sent for retreading it must be identified, so the retreader can perform the proper procedures in order for it to be returned to service.
- 8 If no signs are found then, before it can be put back in service, it must be inflated ONLY using the following procedures:
 - (a) Mount the tire and inflate to 5 psi, outside a proper inspected restraining device, with the valve core removed. Inflate the tire using a clip air chuck with a pressure regulator and a sufficient enough hose not to be in the trajectory area.
 - (b) If no bulges are found, place in a proper restraining device and inflate to 20 psi, with valve core still removed, looking for any wrinkles or bulging. Listen for any popping or cracking sounds using the remote air device and staying clear of the trajectory area. Remember it's the air that does the damage!
 - (c) If there are no signs, then continue to inflate tire to 20 psi over max inflation pressure or to max pressure of rim. Then inspect for any of the signs of the zipper rupture. If there is no indication, release the air pressure. Then install the valve core and inflate to operating pressure. I like to let the tire sit for 5 minutes in the restraining device just for reassurance that all is okay.
- 9 **Remember:** no matter how big of a hurry you are in, **NEVER inflate a truck tire outside of a restraining device** and always use a remote air station to keep you out of the trajectory zone. And make sure it is capable of releasing air without entering the trajectory zone.

For complete zipper rupture inspection procedures refer to RMA volume 33 number 3: Inspection Procedures to Identify Potential Sidewall Zipper Ruptures in Steel Cord Radial Truck, Bus, and Light Truck Tires.

Remember: NEVER inflate a truck tire without the use of a proper restraining device and a remote air station. Every year tire technicians are injured or killed because this golden rule is broken.

Be Safe and always wear your PPE!!



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ARE MANUFACTURERS' PRICING POLICIES HARMFUL?

By Paul Hyatt (Published in *Tire Business*, January 4th, 2013)

Are tire manufacturers' pricing policies hurting the U.S. economy?

During the 2012 presidential campaign, candidates Mitt Romney and Barack Obama both declared in their speeches that they would put America back to work and increase manufacturing jobs in the U.S.

How will that be possible? With the practice of "country" or area pricing, retailers are buying elsewhere at more competitive pricing.

Asia and India are only too eager to offer their products at prices based upon purchased units rather than locations, and take advantage of these short-sighted policies.

Consider the following manufacturers' corporate policies. Notwithstanding duties, a container of tires coming from Japan or Atlanta is priced differently in New Brunswick or Ontario—higher by 15 to 25 percent than in the U.S., and different again whether it lands in far away Vancouver or New York—and the Canadian dollar—in late December—was at a higher value than the U.S. dollar.

Consider the fact that tires made in the U.S. are priced differently for the same unit quantity in areas of similar population within the States—even with shipping costs removed from the equation.

Consider the fact that tires made in Canada, then shipped to points in the States, can be purchased by Canadian dealers from a U.S. dealer at a lesser cost than they can in Canada.

The manufacturers attempted to suppress the gray market activity with voiding out-of-country warranty claims and registering and checking serial numbers at point of delivery. In trying to defend this "country pricing" policy with these tactics, they not only helped the downward slide of their North American workforce but turned their backs on the very entrepreneurship that made America great.

Fortunately, Canadian and American tire dealers faced this challenge, as they usually do with government and manufacturers' detrimental policies, by finding other methods of survival, often taking advantage of loopholes and finding friendlier and more reasonable sources of supply.

Not too many years ago there were only a few major tire manufacturers. Today there are many spawned by the ineffectiveness of corporate management to respond to changing

markets and their inadequacies of pricing policies.

I have been in the tire business for 58 years as a tire buster, retreader and an owner and have seen many changes over those years—some good, some bad. It still amazes me that manufacturers continue to ignore the dynamics of today's international marketplace and continue their policies of price disparity and country pricing.

Some of these international companies are indeed proposing new plants with robotic manufacturing in the U.S. to take advantage of the huge marketplace that is present in North America.

As we now approach the so-called "financial cliff" in the U.S., will manufacturers focus on ways to sell North American-made tire products within North America without their hurtful policies of country pricing?

As there is no disparity with shipping costs or handling between the two countries, with similar labor costs and notwithstanding duties if any, I wonder why country pricing continues to exist—hurting both the North American manufacturing plants and their diminishing workforce.

There is no area disparity when it comes to retail customers who price shop online—and purchase tires from other areas and countries where the price is better.

Will this practice of hurting the U.S. economy continue because they are oblivious to the harm they create?

Will tire manufacturers continue to foster the practice of encouraging gray market activities and expanding global shopping among successful dealers and consumers in the global marketplace?

Will price disparity continue because it fits their marketing scheme?

I guess President Obama has his work cut out for him!

Paul Hyatt is the former owner of Superior Tire & Auto Inc. in Scarborough, Ontario. After running the company for about 30 years, last year he sold the dealership/franchisor to two partners who were Superior's first franchisees. He also is a past president of the Tire Dealers Association of Canada, the Ontario Tire Dealers Association and the Tire Industry Association. Mr. Hyatt can be reached at phyatt@superiortire.ca.

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THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD ON THE HUGE GAP IN CANADA - U.S. TIRE PRICES



"... Wholesale prices of tires manufactured in Canada are 30% cheaper in the United States than in Canada."

Following a Senate Committee hearing that confirmed discriminatory pricing of tires sold to Canadian tire dealers, Tire Dealers Association of Canada has launched an aggressive campaign to combat the resulting tire prices that are on average 32% higher than in the U.S.

The Senate Committee on Finance has agreed with the Tire Dealers Association of Canada's (TDAC) findings that discriminatory "country pricing" by tire manufacturers is forcing tire consumers across Canada to pay anywhere from 30-50% more for the same tires selling in the U.S.

"Many U.S. based tire manufacturers use their supplier contracts with Canadian tire retailers to force them to buy tires wholesale directly from their Canadian affiliates rather than directly through much less costly U.S. wholesale distribution channels." says Bob Bignell, Chair of the Tire Price Disparity Committee of the Tire Dealers Association of Canada adding, "If a Canadian retailer buys wholesale tires from a U.S. wholesale distributor rather than through the manufacturer's Canadian sales division, both the Canadian retailer and the U.S. distributor have their supplies of tires cut off by the manufacturer. In the end it's the Canadian tire consumer who gets gouged by higher tire prices."

Notwithstanding tire manufacturer's practices of barring cheaper U.S. wholesale tires from being imported into Canada, even Canadian made tires are more expensive in Canada than they are in the U.S. In October 2011, TDAC wrote to Finance Minister Jim Flaherty noting that, "Incredibly the wholesale prices of tires manufactured in Canada are 30% cheaper in the United States than in Canada."

Bob Bignell notes that, "Given that the US and Canadian dollars have been at parity for a long time, that many tires sold at higher prices in Canada are made here and that there are no import duties or tariffs on imported tires, there is no excuse whatsoever for tire prices in Canada to be more than 5% higher than they



are in the United States. There is simply no rationale whatsoever for a tire made in Nova Scotia to cost a Nova Scotian more than an American."

Over the next year TDAC will be undertaking a number of measures to protect Canadian consumers in the next year:

A Canada-U.S. border-wide, brand-by-brand tire price survey of passenger, light truck and medium-truck tire prices to highlight the worst offenders in penalizing Canadians on tire pricing. Publishing the results of those price surveys and making those results available to consumers and Canadian regulators.

Petitioning tire manufacturers directly on behalf of Canadian tire consumers to get them to recognize the consumer impacts of the massive disparity between Canadian and U.S. wholesale tire prices. The basic premise of TDAC's position to manufacturers is that, "There is no excuse for Canadians paying more for tires than Americans do."

About the Tire Dealers Association of Canada (TDAC):

The Tire Dealers Association of Canada is comprised of the Western Canada Tire Dealers Association; Ontario Tire Dealers Association; L'Association des Specialistes Pneu et Mecanique du Quebec and Atlantic Tire Dealers Association representing over 2,000 tire dealers across Canada.

For further details, please contact:

Don Huff, Environmental Communication Options
416-972-7404, 416-805-7720 (cell-onsite) or
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My representative Trisha is awesome. She drops by at least twice a year to make sure I have the right coverage, and if I ever have any questions or problems, I call her up and it’s taken care of.

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Knowing your business matters.





CANADIAN SCAM UNDERScores DANGERS OF LARGE CREDIT SALES

Educate employees to detect and avoid a wide range of frauds and scams

Richard Frost, Loss Prevention Consultant
National Accounts and Associations

SCAM ALERT! We've been made aware of an incredibly elaborate scam operation targeting North American businesses. While it appears to have peaked this past October and November, the culprits may still be at large. It is always worth keeping your eyes open for this and similar operations. Tire dealers were one of the industries originally targeted, with many Canadian dealers approached with some becoming victims of the scam.

How it works

In summary, the scam begins when an illegitimate Canadian business (typically located in or around Montreal) requests a line of credit with your business. They will fax or e-mail complete references, an excellent Dun & Bradstreet report, and the name of a banker to call in case of questions or concerns to prove authenticity. They will also have a working phone number that is answered by a live person and their website will look legit, with details, history, and information. This company will then place an order for materials on the line of credit and arrange for shipping by a third party. The materials are hauled to Quebec, and payment is never made.

FBI takes note

The U.S. has been hardest hit with 180 known businesses losing more than \$9,000,000. Some Canadian companies have also been victimized.

Quoting from the FBI website the following industries have been affected by this scheme:

- Lumber and construction material retailers (lumber, siding, roofing, flooring, etc.)
- Tire retailers
- Auto parts retailers
- Trucking and logistics companies
- Painting supply companies

The FBI is aware of the following allegedly fraudulent Canadian businesses that are currently or have previously been involved in this scheme:

Canstruct, Inc.

AYA Distributors

Xpress Auto Parts

Point Tech Performer, Inc.

Emptech

What to watch for

Some red flags include:

- The fake business' website has sections copied from other legitimate websites
- Geographically, there are a lot of other suppliers between Montreal and yourself (Why are they placing the order with you?)
- This company will max out their credit limit on the first order
- A third party, independent trucker is being used to transfer the stock
- They are not willing to put down a deposit on their order

Dealerships should educate their employees and have processes in place to help them detect and avoid a wide range of frauds and scams including counterfeit money or travellers cheques, fraudulent bank drafts, confidence schemes etc. Generally the old adage still applies, "If it is too good to be true, it probably is."

How to protect yourself

Here are some things for Dealerships to consider:

Do you have a process for purchases made on credit?

Do you have procedures in place for a quantity purchase of single or similar items? i.e. tires, small equipment, small electronics

Does the process change if the purchase is over a certain dollar amount?

Do you require deposits?

Do you have procedures in place for out of province / out of country purchases?

continued on page 19



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CANADIAN SCAM UNDERScores DANGERS OF LARGE CREDIT SALES

continued from page 17

How do you verify that the payment made is in good standing?

One targeted tire dealer had procedures in place requiring them to get an upfront deposit on large credit purchases. The deposit request was declined by this illegitimate company and they hung up, preventing a loss for this company.

Here are other websites that provide information and solutions on fraud and scams:

<http://www.rcmp.gc.ca>

<http://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/>

<http://www.fbi.gov/scams-safety>

This particular scam may have run its course, but another scam will be on the horizon. **Be careful out there!**

Partners In Prevention

At Federated Insurance, we believe Loss Prevention is a critical component of your Risk Management Program. Your Risk Services Coordinator together with our Loss Prevention Team is available

to assist you in reviewing your specific business situation and recommend ideas for your ATM. Working together to reduce your loss exposures protects your bottom line!

For more information, contact your Risk Services Coordinator, our Loss Prevention Department at 1-800-665-1934, or visit our website at www.federated.ca.

Federated provides this Loss Prevention Bulletin as a service to our policyholders and their business advisors. The information provided is intended to be general in nature, and may not apply in your province. The advice of independent legal or other business advisors should be obtained in developing forms and procedures for your business. The recommendations in this bulletin are designed to reduce the risk of loss, but should not be construed as eliminating any risk or loss.



WCTD..... Scholarships: Apply NOW!

Scholarships

The Western Canada Tire Dealers are awarding five Scholarships of \$2000 each.

Eligibility

The Applicant is an immediate family member (son, daughter, spouse or legal ward) of a person that is a full-time, permanent employee, for at least one year, by a company that is a current voting member of the WCTD and has been a member in good standing for the previous five years.

The Applicant has been accepted to attend an accredited Canadian post-secondary institution and has registered for classes for the upcoming semester.

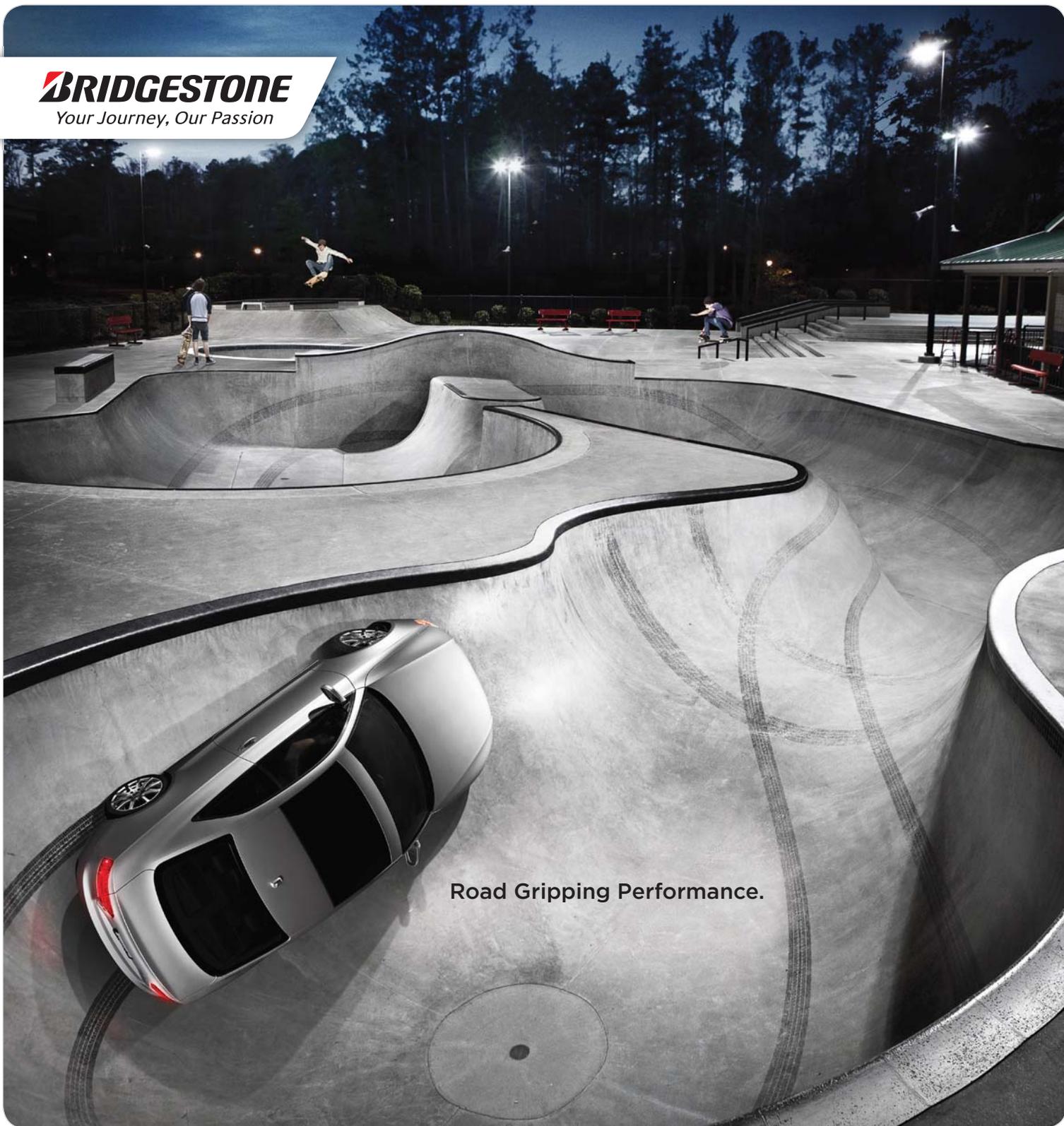
PLEASE NOTE: SALARY CAP CLAUSE HAS BEEN REMOVED

Application

All Applications submitted must include the Applicant's Social Insurance Number. The Applicant must submit:

- A résumé, not to exceed three typewritten pages, outlining their education to date; any involvement in extracurricular activities; any academic honours or any community or volunteer work that they may have done.
- Reference letters that confirm their involvement or achievements but the letters cannot be from family members.
- A letter from a WCTD member confirming the current employment of an immediate family member.
- A complete transcript of all courses and grades sent to the Scholarship Committee no later than July 31st of the year the application is submitted. Transcripts must be submitted directly by the educational institution.
- A confirmation of registration along with a tentative course schedule from an accredited post-secondary institution.

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BRIDGESTONE ADDS THREE TO AG TIRE LINE-UP

Bridgestone Americas has launched three new Firestone-branded ag tire products.

First up is the Firestone Cyclical Field Operation Harvest tires, which will be available in late 2013.

"The CFO tires meet the demands of extreme load cycles during harvest season so producers can get more work done in less time," said Tom Rodgers, sales and marketing director. "CFO is an extension of our recently introduced AD2 technology, which allows for cyclical loading of tires that meet the Tire and Rim industry standard for IF loading."

Firestone CFO tires are engineered with an IF-designation and, compared to equivalent-sized standard radial tires, can deliver additional performance benefits, such as reduced soil compaction, improved traction and added fuel savings, improved ride with increased sidewall deflection, and 20% deeper R-1W tread bars than industry standard versus R1 tread depth, Bridgestone said.

Next is the new Firestone Radial All Traction RC, designed for today's high-capacity, self-propelled sprayers. The new tire also features AD2 technology.

"The specially-designed, wider tread bars on these tires create an application-specific tread pattern that provides both a smoother roading at faster speeds, as well as a longer and better-wearing

tire," said Rogers. "The AD2 sprayer tires are rated up to 40 mph so producers can get more done in less time than with standard tires."

The Radial All Traction RC tires also feature IF- and VF- designations and can carry more load at the same pressure or the same load at a lower pressure, resulting in a larger footprint and reduced soil compaction; wider tread bars for improved distribution of ground pressure from the bar face; a curved bar design for a smoother ride; and a 20% deeper R-1W tread bars vs. R1 tread depth for longer wear.

Finally, borrowing from its light truck / SUV line-up, Bridgestone has launched a Firestone Destination radial implement tire, which will be available in 2013.

"This tire was created specifically with agricultural needs in mind," said Rogers. "By utilizing our AD2 technology, the Destination Farm tires leave a larger footprint with less soil compaction. Our R&D group worked closely with our light truck and truck / bus tire development groups to leverage technology from each area in creating this innovative solution for the North American farmer."

The Destination implement tire provides for more load at a lower pressure than standard equivalent-sized bias and radial tires; wider section width for more contact area; and steel belts for improved resistance of stubble penetration. — *Tire Review*

Fuel-Efficient Tires ARE HERE TO STAY!

By: Joanne Draus Klein, *Tire Review*

It's a recurring concept in the 21st Century: What's good for the planet also can be good for the piggy bank. But realizing that fact doesn't make the initial popular transition to eco-friendly products simple, nor any less costly.

So it goes with fuel-efficient passenger tires. Tiremakers are experiencing considerable growth in the products' popularity, leading even smaller brands to venture into the arena. After all, both consumers and automakers are expressing a demand for low rolling resistance and other fuel-efficient considerations. But how are manufacturers – the large and, most notably, the small – experiencing and dealing with the trend?

"Fuel-efficient tires are growing in popularity for many reasons," says Rick Brennan, vice president of marketing for Kumho Tire USA. "Among them are the increase in overall eco-consciousness and gas prices. The public is more aware of its responsibility to be more environmentally aware, and to take care of the natural environments we inhabit.

"In addition to those factors, the ever-inflating nature of gas prices is always a hot button with consumers and companies," he adds.

"From a consumer's point of view, the interest is really on increasing gas mileage and not necessarily on fuel-efficient tires. Consumers will take a fuel-efficient tire today if it provides more benefit without costing much more."

And therein lies the challenge.

"Most consumers are looking for an element of fuel-efficiency in their tire purchase but are not always willing or able to pay a premium price for that technology," explains Scott Jamieson, director of product management at Cooper Tire & Rubber Co. "Typically, low rolling resistance tires have been priced toward the top of the product screen. With fuel prices higher than \$3 or \$4 per gallon, low rolling resistance tires typically enable the consumer to recover the price premium plus more over the life of the tires. However, some consumers find it difficult to pay more up front for the promise of a greater return later."

That phenomenon was exacerbated by the recent economic downturn, but changes are being seen as the economy recovers.

"In tough economic times, paying more at retail for a fuel-efficient tire is even more difficult, especially if it isn't really clear to consumers

continued on page 25

67 Passenger Coach with cargo, Toronto to Montreal, 542.4 km, 6 hours and 14 minutes.



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CM980

 Tanker Truck Driver Checklist

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Commercial Tire Checklist

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continued from page 21

Fuel-Efficient Tires ARE HERE TO STAY!

By: Joanne Draus Klein, *Tire Review*

that they get the benefit," says Fardad Niknam, senior director of technical services and product planning at Toyo Tire USA Corp. "For the average driver, fuel efficiency is hard to notice from fill-up to fill-up. Gas prices have been volatile and drivers typically don't have a reference point week-to-week for comparison of possible savings from more fuel-efficient, green tires versus regular tires they might have had on the same vehicle previously. So they really have to trust in the claims of manufacturers as to the fuel-savings benefits of green tires."

Nevertheless, the increase in legislation mandating higher miles-per-gallon standards in America and Europe, including Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) regulations for car makers, has helped to keep the trend rolling.

"All global tiremakers need to keep this in mind for not only eco-specific tires, but for all future production on all patterns," Brennan says. "Every tire we make is going to have to be more fuel-efficient, whether this is UHP, light truck or a tire for a hybrid vehicle. Fuel efficiency will be another feature offered on any tire, and a fuel-efficient-only focus will be a niche tire. As a result, sales of tires with better fuel efficiency will increase, especially after the new labeling requirements become mandatory, mandating rolling resistance grades be added along with the UTQG ratings."

"The CAFE levels that vehicle manufacturers have to obtain has played a large role in shaping the importance of rolling resistance for both OE and replacement tires," Jamieson adds. "As vehicle manufacturers strive to obtain the 54.4 mpg CAFE by 2025, the emphasis on fuel-efficient tires is certainly going to increase at the OE level, and that increase will likely flow to the replacement level."

Beyond Regulations

But while many tiremakers say they expect continued growth in this trend, they also recognize that certain elements can't be sacrificed in the creation of fuel-efficient tires. These include wear, wet traction, lower mass, advanced constructions and innovative tread-siping technologies.

Yokohama's newest fuel-efficient product, for example, is the Avid Ascend, which the company's director of product planning Andrew Briggs says incorporates orange oil to offer low rolling resistance, high mileage and all-season traction.

Toyo's Versado Eco, a grand-touring all-season tire built for hybrids and other environmentally-friendly vehicles, uses naturally derived tread compound materials and recycled polyester in its tire casing materials, amplifying its green factor, Niknam says.

Kumho's Ecowing KH30 is formulated with eco-friendly, silica-based compounds, designed for low rolling resistance, but doesn't compromise comfort or handling, according to Brennan.

Meanwhile, the Cooper GFE features traction-compensating sipes that increase in length as the tire wears, locking tread elements

together and helping to reduce rolling resistance, says Jamieson, who adds that the company will launch a new tire in May that targets weight reduction – two pounds worth, a significant number.

And the Hankook Enfren Eco's low rolling resistance is accompanied by competent wet and dry traction and a quiet, comfortable ride, says Henry Kopacz, Hankook's public relations and product marketing specialist.

"Both internal and external testing is done for fuel-efficient tires," Kopacz explains. "Most importantly is rolling resistance testing so that the design of the tire meets its performance targets." He says that an independent external lab is used for such tests.

Yokohama's Avid Ascend

"It's one thing to have a tire that reduces the energy required to roll on the road," Jamieson adds about testing, "but it also has to brake effectively and accelerate appropriately. At the end of the day, the consumer is still going to drive their vehicle in (wet, dry and snowy) conditions, and we need to understand how these tires are going to perform on their road trips."

Many of the distinctive technologies of fuel-efficient tires can in fact be the products' best marketing points. Kopacz, for example, says Hankook pitches the silica rubber compounds and internal construction of its green tires. "Aerodynamic sidewall design, silica tread compound and heat-control technology all offer their own benefits in the area of fuel-efficient tires," he says. "This is information that can be provided to consumers to explain the overall fuel-efficient tire package."

Cooper, in addition, markets its GFE tire using print, online, training and in-store point-of-sale sources that help consumers understand how the tire can improve fuel efficiency without compromising traction, handling and ride quality, Jamieson says.

"It's critical for our dealers to be able to explain to the consumer the benefits that our products bring to their vehicle," he adds, mentioning Cooper's dealer e-learning web courses. "Dealers should also communicate that proper tire inflation is an important part of optimizing a vehicle for good gas mileage. You can improve vehicle safety and fuel economy by as much as 3% if you keep your tires inflated properly."

"Dealers should also remind vehicle owners that there are other critical factors," Niknam agrees, "like proper tire inflation, vehicle alignment and maintenance, and a driving speed that will impact realization of fuel savings."

"As mentioned before, fuel-efficiency is not a sole reason for consumers to purchase a specific tire," Brennan summarizes. "For dealers to sell these tires, they need to position them in a way that showcases the strength of the tires in all areas that matter – and have the added benefit of better gas mileage be a supplemental fact." — *Tire Review*





WCTD HALL OF FAME - NOMINATION FORM

The WCTD is accepting nominations for the Hall of Fame, to be awarded during the TDAC Convention, to be held in Niagara Falls, Ontario in July 2014.

The **Hall of Fame is open to all in the tire industry, including tire dealers and retreaders, manufacturers, inventors, equipment supplies, etc.**

For the criteria go to **www.wctd.ca** and click on **Members Benefits**

Nominations are due by March 31, 2013.

To nominate an individual for the WCTD Hall of Fame, please return this form and other information such as résumés, photos, newspaper articles, letters and awards to the address shown below.

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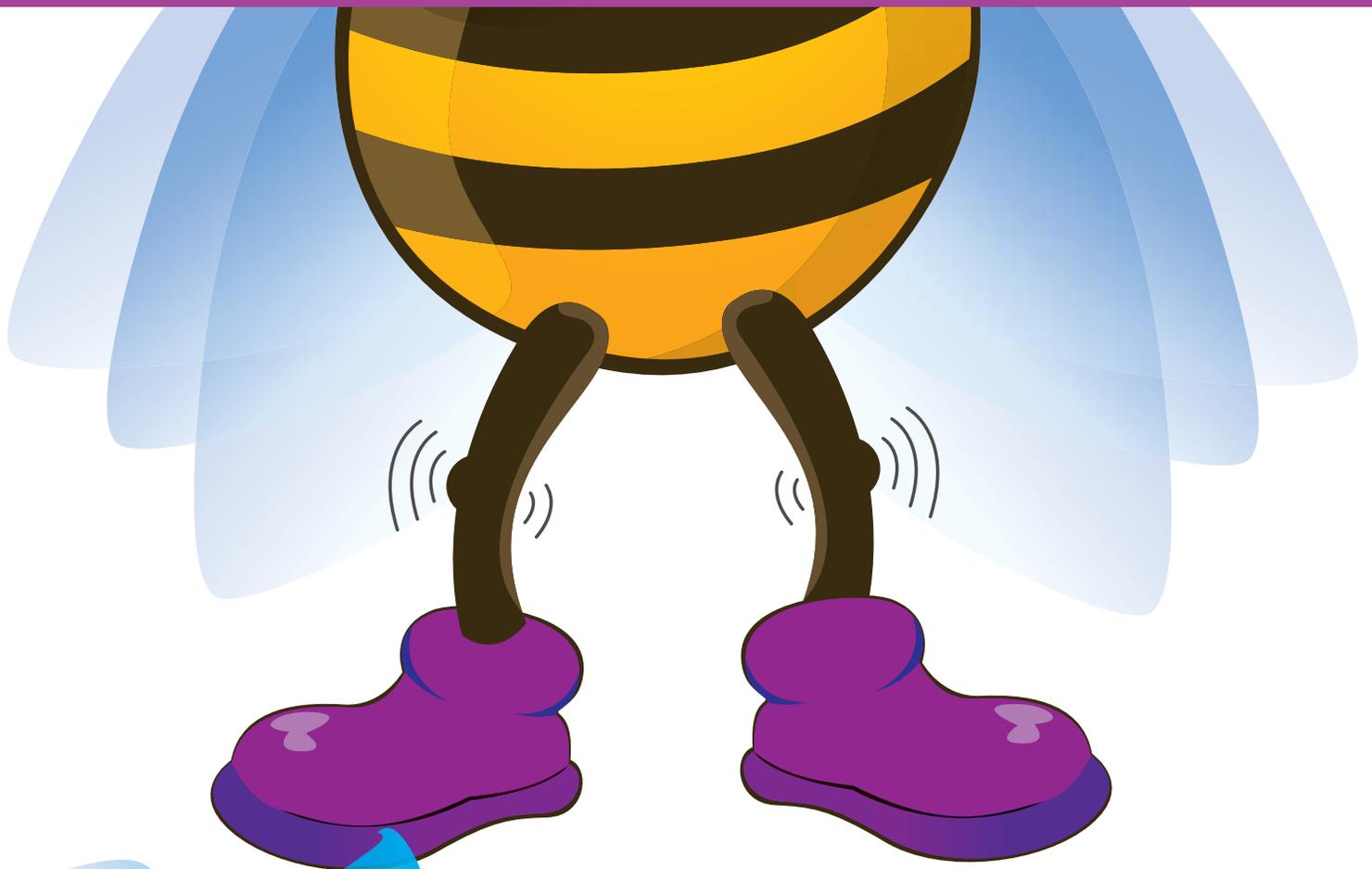
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Please complete and return form to **WCTD** by **March 31, 2013.**

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