

THE TRACKER

THE PUBLICATION FOR TIRE PROFESSIONALS
FROM WESTERN CANADA TIRE DEALERS



**AWARD
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PERFORMANCE**

Ryan, Terry and Paul McAlduff
of Tireland Performance

PLUS Bricks + mortar resurgence • Deferrals boost aftermarket
• WA. State mulls studs ban • TSBC: Community Grants deadline
• CAA: Worn winter treads • Federated: Reduce electrical fire risk



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THE TRACKER

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We hope you find this issue of The Tracker informative, educational and entertaining. We welcome your feedback and invite you to submit any ideas you have for upcoming issues. Feel free to drop us a line (or two)...

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WCTD MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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CITY	
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b. Retreader	2. Manufacturer
	3. Exporter or Mfg. Rep.
	4. Dealer Support Services
MY BUSINESS IS MADE UP PRIMARILY OF THE SALE OF TIRES AND TIRE RELATED SERVICES	YES NO (CIRCLE ONE)
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



THE ROAD AHEAD

AS WE GAZE into the future we're seeing and hearing a couple of things that will impact our industry in many different ways. Take new car sales, for example. Regardless as to whether the choice is E.V., hybrid or gas engine (I.C.E.), moving forward, they will all be affected in one way or another.

Of course none of us has a crystal ball in our back pocket to be able to see into the future. But at least what we can do today is take a look at these areas and prepare ourselves for whatever lies ahead. If our information serves us well we should be able to make the necessary adjustments to help us look after our customer base as we continue to work through 2026.

AFTERMARKET OPPORTUNITY

The cost of everything going up over the past year or so has put a lot of financial pressure on consumers. Hence 2026 may well be a year where a lot of people think twice about purchasing a new vehicle. New car sales have somewhat declined and dealer inventory has grown in all areas. With the confirmation of Chinese E.V. imports coming into Canada in fairly substantial numbers it is going to be an interesting year. That said, if we look at the spin-offs that may flow into service and vehicle maintenance, it could be a good opportunity for all our members. See the Tire Business story on page 16 of this issue.



AN ENDURING RELATIONSHIP

This is only part of what's going on in today's ever-changing world. Another area being talked about around the globe is the evolution of the traditional 'Bricks and Mortar' retail outlet. It seems today that people are looking for more in the way of service. Rather than just ordering tires on line and then having them installed at a later date, customers are looking to form a connection with a company. They're after someone they can trust to supply them, truly, with the right product and service for their vehicle or vehicles.



Tim Hollett
President, WCTD

A LEGACY CLIENTELE

In time that relationship develops into one even more important. In fact it may well become generational. Once that connection of trust is formed, the customer feels more confident. So much so they can start sending family members to have their maintenance and service work done there as well.

At this crucial time in our industry we need to understand exactly why our customers are thinking this way. And fully comprehend just how important it is for us to make what changes are necessary to accommodate them.

If we all work together and continue to look after our customer base—as well as our family and staff—and keep communication open within our communities, we will continue to grow and prosper into the future. The proverbial change is inevitable. So let's make the necessary adjustments needed, stay positive and continue to excel in all areas.

That's the best way to keep building your legacy clientele.

Let me wish you ongoing a productive and prosperous 2026. But, above all, stay healthy and happy—and enjoy every moment.

Sincerely,

Tim Hollett
President WCTD

ATTURO TIRES

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RAY'S REFLECTIONS

AS WE WELCOMED in 2026 many of us spent time reflecting on past achievements and considering what lies ahead with renewed focus. For me, personally, I looked back not only on the last year but on the last decade, as I'm in the process of retiring from my position as executive director of Western Canada Tire Dealers. It has been a great ten years—during which I have been able to learn even more about this industry. However, the time has come for me to move over and let someone else take on this role. Full details on my successor will follow in the next issue of The Tracker.

TRAINING

At our last board meeting it was determined that WCTD's focus for 2026 would be on training and safety. When talking with our dealers, training is usually the subject at the top of the list. I'm delighted to advise that we are now able to offer Tire Industry Association (TIA) level 300 training for both the Automotive Tire Service and the Commercial Tire service, as well as Off The Road (OTR) installer training. If you are interested in sending anyone to any of these training programs or would like more information please contact Robert Labossiere at 780-554-9259 or at robl@wctd.ca

SCHOLARSHIPS

This is a reminder that we are again offering four \$2000.00 scholarships this year. And that it's almost time to send in those applications. Please let your staff know that their immediate family members could qualify for this scholarship. To find all the details for the scholarship program go to our website or send Robert Labossiere an e-mail (robl@wctd.ca) and we will e-mail you the information.

INSURANCE RENEWALS

Is it time to update or renew your business insurance? At WCTD we're delighted to work with Federated Insurance as a valued partner. Federated are tire industry insurance specialists, so we strongly suggest if your insurance policy is due for a refresh, or if you're interested in seeing what they have to offer, that you talk to Chris Leahey at Federated, who can lend his expertise and connections to guide you accordingly. Please contact him at 980-932-3195 or chris.leahey@federated.ca and he'll be happy to oblige.

CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

We will be holding our charity golf tournament at the Stoney Plain Golf Club on Sunday June 28th 2026. The charity we will be supporting this year will again be Ronald McDonald House. Please take the time to consider a sponsorship for your company and or make plans to attend what is truly an enjoyable day of golf and friendship, all for a good cause.

2026 SUGGESTED LABOUR RATES

We are currently working on the 2026 suggested labour rates. The accuracy of our report improves considerably based If if you would like to contribute to this process please Contact Rob at robl@wctd.ca.



Ray Geleta
Executive Director,
WCTD

NOTICE OF WCTD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We will be holding the Western Canada Tire Dealers Annual General Meeting on April 24th at 3:00 to 4:30 pm. at the River Rock Casino Resort, 8811 River Road, Richmond, BC. All Members are more than welcome (and highly encouraged!) to attend.

Again, thank you for all the support the organization and its members have given me over the last ten years.

Ray Geleta - WCTD Executive Director
rayg@wctd.ca

NOTICE OF WESTERN CANADA TIRE DEALERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR WESTERN CANADA TIRE DEALERS WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY, APRIL 24TH, 2026 AT 3 PM, AT RIVER ROCK CASINO RESORT, 8811 RIVER ROAD, RICHMOND, BC

A quorum shall consist of eligible voting members present or represented by proxy or, in the case of a corporate body, by its duly appointed representative.

Voting members may make submissions, but these must be in writing and forwarded to the association office, to be received by Friday, March 20th, 2026, in order to be placed on the agenda. Printed agendas will be available at the meeting and also electronically.

The WCTD Board of Directors requests your attendance, participation and input to help them direct the business of the association. For more information please contact Ray Geleta, WCTD Executive Director, at rayg@wctd.ca





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RAY GELETA: AN APPRECIATION

– BY PAUL McALDUFF, BC DIRECTOR, WCTD PAST PRESIDENT

BY THE TIME you are reading this, our retiring Executive Director, Ray Geleta, will have packed up his office and files to hand over to WCTD's new Executive Director. I understand that announcement will be made in April, followed up with more information in the next issue of *The Tracker*.

Asked to reflect on Ray's tenure over the last decade, I'm very happy to oblige.

In 2010, I was invited to apply for a director position on the WCTD board along with Blaire Holmes and Ray Geleta. My recollection is that we were all accepted and were confirmed to serve on the board at the WCTD industry convention held in Victoria in 2011.

As I got to know Ray, I realized that his first-hand knowledge and experience within the Western Canada Tire industry was (and remains) quite remarkable. In 2016, after I was voted in as WCTD President, one of the first major tasks for our board of directors was to find a replacement Executive Director. Ray Geleta suited the position's requirements perfectly—and he agreed to take on the job.

Ray brought with him a wealth of knowledge gained from his 50-plus years in the tire industry. But, above all, he also executed

his duties always from a deep-seated sense of solidly grounded ethics. His governance and advice to our executive directors and to members of Western Canada Tire Dealers overall has been incredible. Ray's capabilities in maneuvering through the complexities and provincial bureaucratic 'hoops' of tire industry issues have contributed significantly to WCTD's enduring reputation as the leading tire association in North America.



When Ray and I attended Tire Industry Association (TIA) meetings at the SEMA show over the years, we were always asked about our process of working with government and environmental issues. Ray's presence there was always held in high esteem. He has represented our association with unfathomable knowledge and integrity.

I hope that he enjoys his retirement from WCTD but also hope that he'll stay in touch for us to occasionally consult him on past and current issues.

Thank you so much for all that you have given us, Ray.

WCTD CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT 2026 SUPPORTS RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

Last year's third annual WCTD charity golf tournament was a great success. WCTD executive director and tournament organiser Ray Geleta managed the day's activities. Net proceeds (after all expenses) were divided between the association's Academic Scholarship program and Ronald McDonald House (RMH). Ray Geleta and WCTD board members Rob Labossiere and Andrew Boulton visited RMH and presented the worthy charity with a cheque for \$5,000.00

We also extend a huge 'thank you' to Federated Insurance. Not only did they participate in our golf tournament by sponsoring the hole in one and holding a raffle for a child's Edmonton Oilers Connor McDavid jersey raising over \$500.00. They also have a

program where they match any association (including WCTD) charitable donation up to a certain amount. This year they presented RMH with a cheque for \$2500.00 on our behalf. Again, thank you to Federated Insurance.

Western Canada Tire Dealers is proud to support Ronald McDonald House both now and in the future. RMH will again be the beneficiary this year's tournament, to be held on Sunday June 28th. Make plans to attend now!



PERFORMANCE PERSONIFIED

DROP BY NORTH VANCOUVER'S Tireland Performance Centre on any given day and there's a good chance you'll find owner Paul McAlduff talking (either in person or by phone) with a customer. The topic, naturally, will be tires (and possibly wheels). As McAlduff asks about the client's driving habits, the discourse will be thorough and detail-driven: covering commutes, geographic surroundings, typical weather conditions (which can change quickly on the North Shore), and a whole lot more.

It's the kind of exchange that's emblematic of McAlduff's widely and well regarded reputation for 'above and beyond' customer service. And it's the primary reason that saw the long-running, independent dealership (established in 1986) recently win a North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce Service Excellence Award for businesses with 1-10 Employees.

No doubt, there are plenty of good reasons why Tireland Performance scooped the award. Check some of supporters' on-line comments and a theme becomes apparent, such as, "You deserve it! Paul is a very service oriented guy, no one better." Some hail McAlduff and his team not only for their practical knowledge but also for their restraint, resisting the chance to 'upsell' where simpler (and less costly) solutions exist—something that doesn't always happen elsewhere.

A LONGTIME, LOYAL BASE

Tireland's longevity didn't happen by accident. "We have customers returning now who've been coming here for 20, 30 or forty years—since we started," says Paul, who's never wavered in his dedication to delivering top tier service at every opportunity.

Before moving to the coast from Winnipeg, McAlduff was an accomplished off-road racer. At the time off-roading in Manitoba was at its peak, enjoying immense popularity. Paul ran his IHC Scout on BF Goodrich, with whom over the years he developed a sponsorship agreement. He was also a founding member of the Manitoba Four Wheel Drive Association. Off-road racing took all forms, from sand drags to hill climbs and even mud racing. Over time, given the variety of conditions to which he was exposed, Paul built on his considerable expertise, and eventually set up his own specialty parts business, Performance Mart.

FROM OFF ROAD TO TRACK

After McAlduff headed to Vancouver in 1983 the BFG sponsorship continued, this time in another form as Paul



RYAN, TERRY AND PAUL MCALDUFF

and his wife Terry had shifted away from the off-road scene. Through BFG the couple became involved with local Corvette clubs, which were more family oriented. They felt it was a better fit with their social group at the time. "It wasn't just 'a guy thing'," says Paul. Unlike off-road, Corvette racing wasn't just 'a guy thing. Everybody did it as couples. Plus there were men's classes, women's classes and so on. But it was really friendly competition."

"There was quite a group of us that realized we would have to trailer our cars." (It's pretty tough to fit one kid, let alone a couple, in the back of a Corvette, he laughs.) Soon everybody started getting trailers and the schedule grew to include destinations such as Kelowna, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Regina.

"We were all over the place, even down into Washington and Oregon. It was unbelievable. Sometimes in summer we were racing every weekend, traveling all over. The Corvette Clubs (especially in Kelowna) proved to be "a phenomenal success, for years."

Both he and Terry raced his 12 year old Corvette through a string of wins; it wasn't long before the two relinquished their off-road racing activities entirely.



PAUL MCALDUFF



RYAN AND PAUL McALDUFF

AN OPPORTUNITY ARISES

As time went by, increasingly more inclined to tires and wheels, Paul's focus hadn't gone unnoticed by the Vancouver BFG team—and Tireland in particular. As it happened, Tireland was looking for someone who could cater to a growing number of existing and potential premium customers on the North Shore.

The industry insiders appreciated McAlduff's broad experience—especially the practical side with tires and wheels. In time they encouraged him to start selling them. "I reckoned, well, I could do that; and bought myself a tire machine and balancer," recalls Paul who, having started out in a machine shop in the industrial area in 1986, was firmly established by the time Michelin officially acquired the BF Goodrich Tire Division, along with Uniroyal, a deal finalized in 1990.

Paul says he realized that, even though he had plenty of knowledge to share, the future of his business lay in specializing in tires and wheels. The big difference with tires was installation, done promptly and properly. After all, he notes, there's "very little room (if any) for error. Moreover, if you're known for doing things right the first time, then word spreads quickly."

And that's really what it takes not just to survive but thrive for 40 years as an independent tire dealer.



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CAA: ONE IN TWO CARS ROLLING ON WORN WINTER TIRES

WINTER CAME EARLIER in 2025. Many motorists were caught out with summer tires during the first snowfall in early November. A few days after the deadline to have winter tires installed on all vehicles, CAA-Quebec conducted an inspection¹ to determine how many vehicles weren't compliant. Our goal was to assess winter tire wear.

After that first heavy snowfall, stragglers rushed to their mechanic and chaos ensued, with some shops posting full schedules until mid-December for the tire switch. Fortunately, as of December 5, all vehicles inspected by CAA-Quebec were fitted with winter tires.

"The belief that installing winter tires too early causes premature wear is a myth. In fact, getting your vehicle ready for winter as early as October helps you avoid unpleasant surprises when snow starts falling."—Jesse Caron, Automotive Expert, CAA-Quebec

That kind of predictability also helps mechanics have everything they need to handle this busy time.

BALD TIRES

In Quebec, all vehicles must be fitted with winter tires by December 1, and those must be in good condition and not too old. The inspection revealed that too many motorists are trusting tires that are in fair or downright unsafe shape.

- 24% were fitted with tires in fair condition (6/32th of an inch - 7/32th of an inch)
- 26% of the vehicles inspected were fitted with tires in unsafe or dangerous condition (5/32th of an inch or less)
- 50% had tires in good or very good condition (8/32th of an inch or over)

"The minimum legal depth is 2/32th of an inch (1.6 mm). However, CAA-Quebec recommends starting the winter season with at least 6/32th of an inch," added Jesse Caron. Tire wear can be easily measured with a depth gauge—a small tool you can buy for less than \$10.

CAA-Quebec inspectors also came across older tires made over five years ago. As tires age, their tread tends to harden. This reduced their flexibility and makes driving less safe. Moreover, their sides will tend to crack and be more prone to splitting. After five years, it is strongly recommended to have a specialist check your tires.



"The belief that installing winter tires too early causes premature wear is a myth. In fact, getting your vehicle ready for winter as early as October helps you avoid unpleasant surprises when snow starts falling."
—Jesse Caron, Automotive Expert, CAA-Quebec

WELL FITTED TODAY, LESS EFFICIENT TOMORROW

The inspection also revealed that 22% of the vehicles examined CAA-Quebec's automotive experts were fitted with tires from marginal or little-known brands, which highlights an important reality—while such tires perform adequately during their first season, they quickly reach their limits. Decreased flexibility, increased rolling noise, reduced capacity to evacuate water, and hard-to-reach after-sales service are just a few of the issues that can impede safety and comfort from one winter to the next. This further underscores the importance of choosing the right tires, regardless of your budget.

ABOUT CAA-QUEBEC

CAA-Quebec offers a wide range of assistance services in a wide variety of sectors, drawing on a human approach. As a socially committed organization, CAA-Quebec strives on a daily basis to protect the interests of its members. And in keeping with its values of reliability and benevolence, it fosters responsible consumption and promotes road safety.



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DID YOU KNOW that electrical fires account for 20 percent of all fires in Canada? Electrical fires are more common than generally thought and account for a significant amount of property damage and serious injuries. Many of these fires result from poor electrical maintenance.

However, incorrectly installed electrical components are also potential fire hazards. Electrical systems are designed to meet the various needs of building occupants and have built-in safety margins. As needs change and electrical equipment and motors are added, and as electrical components age and deteriorate, the possibility for failure increases. Over time, the inspection and maintenance of electrical systems becomes increasingly important.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE TIPS

Electrical systems deteriorate over time and require preventive maintenance. For example, wire insulation dries out, receptacles and switches become loose, and equipment accumulates dirt and oil, which can lead to overheating.

CHECK SYSTEMS REGULARLY

You should be checking your electrical systems regularly. When engaging in these checks, you should look out for:

- Electrical components that are damaged or subject to damage
- Electrical components that are subject to heat and moisture
- Temporary wiring used instead of permanent wiring
- Electrical components that have deteriorated due to age or conditions
- Electrical components that have been poorly installed and/or maintained



Thermal infrared imaging is becoming an increasingly popular method of identifying problem areas within an electrical system. A thermal infrared imaging camera identifies hot spots, which indicates a problem that may result in a fire if not corrected. Any abnormal condition should be investigated immediately.

POSSIBLE HAZARDOUS LOCATIONS TO BE AWARE OF

Special electrical components including motors, lights, or switches are required in locations where flammable gas, vapours, dust, or fibrous material are present. These components are commonly referred to as explosion proof, dust ignition proof or fiber ignition proof. A qualified electrical contractor should be consulted to determine the necessary components for the application.

ENSURE YOUR PROPERTY IS PROTECTED WITH BUSINESS INSURANCE

By implementing some of these key tips, you can rest easy knowing you've done what you can to protect your business. However, no matter how much you prepare, an electrical fire can still happen. To learn more about how a tailored insurance policy can help protect you, your employees, and your building, visit our commercial insurance page today, at www.federated.ca

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AFTERMARKET 2025: A YEAR OF SERVICE DEFERRALS, TRADING DOWN

— BY KATHY McCARRON, TIRE BUSINESS, EDITED

IT COMES AS no surprise that during inflationary times, consumers tend to curtail spending, or look for cheaper options. That's what happened in the automotive aftermarket this year, where price-conscious consumers were trading down to less expensive, lower-tier brands for tires and parts.

"What we're seeing is that share is shifting away from higher-end products, super-premium products, and into both mainstream and value (brands)," Nathan Shipley, executive director for industry analysis at (market researcher) Circana, said during the recent AAPEX event.

"We have seen a fairly significant pullback year-over-year with consumers in the 18-to-24 (age) range," according to Shipley. "You have lower income consumers or households that are pulling back on general merchandise spend,"

He also said there is a shift toward DIY auto service as a way for consumers to save money. When compared with accessories and chemicals/fluids, the average selling price for maintenance/repair saw the highest growth — 2.3% as of October — compared with the year-ago period.

MAINTENANCE DEFERRAL GROWING

Especially among low-income consumers, maintenance deferral is growing. Nearly 50% of consumers said they were delaying tire purchases by driving on their existing tires longer. About a third tried to save money by only replacing one or two tires, instead of buying all four. And nearly another third indicated they were willing to trade down to lower-tier or lower-priced tires.

TIRE PRICES ON THE RISE

Tire prices on average are up 55% since five years ago, according to Circana research. Circana said that there is a growing price gap between Tier 1 and Tier 4 tires. About five years ago, the price difference was about \$90 per tire. Today, it's about \$130 per tire.

THE SWEET SPOT

The average age of vehicles is expected to edge up toward 12.4 years, as people continue to hang on to their old vehicles. The average age of sedans is 12.4 years, pickup trucks is 12.2 years, vans is 12.1 years and SUVs have an average age of 9.3 years. The automotive aftermarket "sweet spot" for maintenance needs is considered to include vehicles that are six to 12 years old.

Circana predicts that 2025 will have the highest number of vehicles in the sweet spot before that number starts to decline in 2026, due to a drop in new-car sales during the COVID pandemic.



"The aftermarket can expect to see a growing stream of service opportunities as the number of vehicles in operation in the U.S. has grown to 295.3 million vehicles, up from 291.1 million in mid-2024"

— Experian Automotive.

AFTERMARKET: INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES

The aftermarket can expect to see a growing stream of service opportunities as the number of vehicles in operation in the U.S. has grown to 295.3 million vehicles, up from 291.1 million in mid-2024, according to Experian Automotive.

An estimated 16.3 million new vehicles were forecast to be sold in 2025, with SUVs continuing to grow in popularity, representing about 43% of vehicles on the road, Experian's Mike Dixon, senior data product manager, and Kirsten Von Busch, product marketing director, told AAPEX attendees.

Passenger cars continue to decline in popularity as U.S. car makers cut production of several sedan models. Yet import car companies are still embracing the car model. Meanwhile, internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles have been losing some market share in the last 12 months, compared with the previous year.

WHAT'S DRIVING THE RETAIL RESURGENCE?

FOR SOME PEOPLE it's hard to imagine consumers getting pumped over the prospect of being able to walk into a showroom and touch ... a tire. But that's what's been happening over the last few years. It wasn't all that long ago the arrival of the digital revolution threatened to drive traditional retail into extinction. Few industry observers saw anything less than the physical retail store's guaranteed decline into obsolescence. Yet, surprisingly, statistics suggest an unexpected shift in the retail landscape is taking place.

Contrary to expectations, many of those once 'doomed for sure' brick-and-mortar stores are not only still around but even enjoying a slight resurgence. (Although, one exception is the shopping mall, which seems to be bearing the brunt of the Amazon onslaught.)

While the jury is still out on precisely what's behind the retail resurrection, there's a general sense that smart marketing and a well balanced blending of hybrid, on- and off-line shopping experiences is starting to bear fruit. Also, there's another obvious factor clearly playing into bricks and mortar's favour.

Even Gen Z (who, along with the rest of us weathered the social disruptions of Covid) is now craving face to face interactions over the (security risky) companionship of their phone or computer screens.

Is it possible that the consumer is developing a renewed appreciation for the tactile and social aspects of in-store shopping? Being able to feel and touch an item before buying it has always been at the core of the retail purchase—something that the online experience can never hope to replicate, let alone elevate, with Zoom, Chat or Messenger interactions.

More to the point, in-person shopping rewards with instant gratification. There is no waiting for delivery. (Not to mention, when it comes to tires, the need and often considerable effort required to find someone technically qualified to install them. Not to mention the ability to connect with somebody who lives and breathes their specialty rather than scroll through endless reviews and now AI generated (often inaccurate) search summaries.

For many younger shoppers the retail visit is being rediscovered as a social outing, an opportunity to connect with others and enjoy the ambiance of a well-curated store, a human experience and relief from slow-loading and info heavy websites.

Smart retailers have also reinvented the in-store experience to make it more appealing, in any number of different ways.

These strategies highlight a clear message: the physical retail sector is adapting, innovating, and thriving. The brick-and-mortar store, once thought to be on the decline, is proving to be an indispensable part of the retail ecosystem, offering experiences that online platforms cannot replicate.

The resurgence of physical retail is a testament to the industry's resilience and its ability to evolve in response to changing consumer behaviour and technological advancements. It's a dynamic, exciting time for retailers and shoppers alike, as the boundaries of what a store can be are continually redefined.

IMPACT OF HYBRID SALES ON EVS

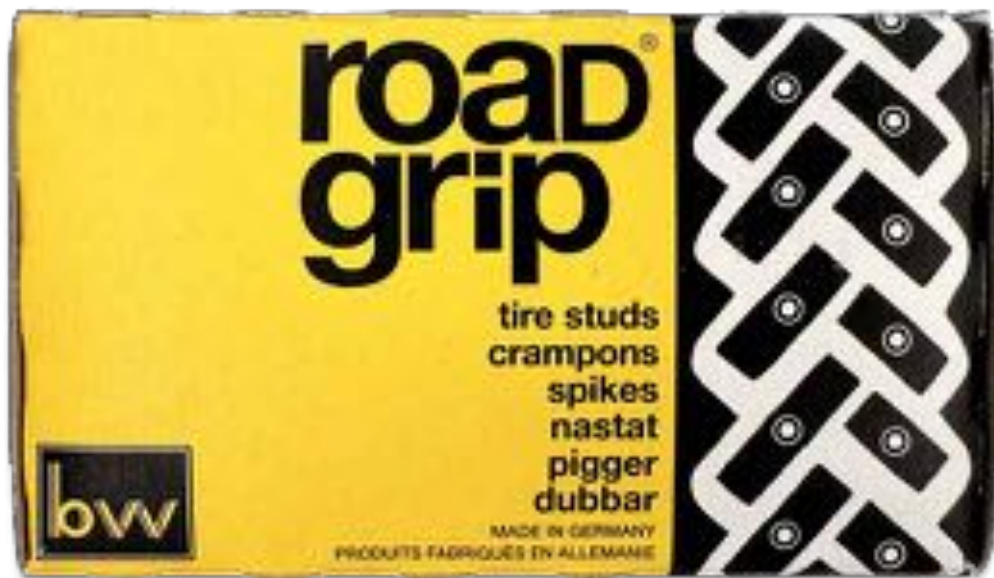
WHILE ICE VEHICLES still claim a lion's share of new-vehicle registrations, at 71.9%, that is down 1.9% year-over-year as electric vehicles (EV) gain some share, according to Experian.

EVs claim a 9.2% share while hybrid vehicles account for 18.9% of new-vehicle registrations as of mid-2025. Hybrids grew 3% year-over-year.

Overall EV growth has slowed, and probably will continue to slow for the remainder of the year following the end of federal incentives in September for EV purchases.



Toyota Prius, photo Wikimedia Commons



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MICHELIN AND SONATUS: EMBEDDED TIRE DIGITAL TWIN SOLUTIONS FOR NEXT-GEN MOBILITY

— SOURCE: BUSINESS WIRE

MICHELIN, A PIONEERING tire manufacturer and innovative expert in composites, together with Sonatus, a leader in intelligence-driven software-defined vehicle technology, demonstrated the latest developments of predictive tire health and maintenance at CES 2026 (Las Vegas, January 6-9). The collaboration highlights how Michelin's proven SmartLoad and SmartWear technologies, deployed via Sonatus AI Director, deliver real-time insights into tire performance directly within the vehicle.

Traditional tire monitoring systems often rely on pressure sensors or mileage-based estimates, which do not capture inputs like braking intensity, vehicle load, cornering forces and other dynamic conditions that are hard on tires. Michelin's SmartLoad and SmartWear models analyze these high-frequency vehicle signals to provide continuous, accurate insights into the actual health of a vehicle's tires, enabling fleets and drivers to optimize tire usage, improve safety, and reduce operational costs.

Software-based tire monitoring has the potential to replace legacy sensor hardware and associated costs, effectively virtualizing the sensors and reducing the bill of materials (BOM), which the analyst firm Frost & Sullivan estimates could contribute to cost savings of \$1.68 billion by 2030.

Michelin's expertise in tire physics, modelling and data, combined with Sonatus's advanced in-vehicle AI orchestration, demonstrates how Michelin Tire Digital Twin, being used for predictive maintenance, can be operationalized at scale.

Sonatus Collector AI enables Michelin to calibrate its algorithms for new automakers, while Sonatus AI Director provides secure, containerized deployment across diverse electronic control units (ECU). Together, these technologies allow Michelin's proprietary models to run at the edge – in-vehicle – reducing reliance on the cloud and protecting sensitive data.



SHOWCASING VIRTUAL TIRES IN NEXT-GEN VEHICLE ARCHITECTURES

"Our demonstrations at CES 2026 showcased how software-defined vehicle platforms can operationalize advanced partner solutions," said Alexandre Corjon, senior vice president of engineering, Sonatus. "By showcasing Michelin's SmartLoad and SmartWear through Sonatus Collector AI and Sonatus AI Director, we are illustrating how predictive tire maintenance can be integrated into the vehicle environment, providing a clear view of the potential for safer, more efficient, and more sustainable mobility."

Michelin Vice President of Michelin Tire Digital Twin, Ali Rezgui confirms the project's ambitions by stating that, "Michelin SmartLoad and SmartWear showcase how our expertise in tire physics and modelling turns complex data into clear, predictive insights. These solutions help automakers and fleets extend tire life, improve safety, reduce costs, and support sustainable mobility. Michelin SmartWear and SmartLoad are the first building blocks of a full portfolio that will enable the OEMs to have Tire Digital Twin in their vehicles. As the tire is the vehicle's only link to the road, its digital twin must be unique, versatile, and integrated with most vehicle dynamic software functions."

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HENDRICKSON ROLLS OUT TIREMAAX TPMS

HENDRICKSON HAS LAUNCHED TIREMAAX TPMS, A HUBCAP-MOUNTED TRAILER TIRE PRESSURE MONITORING SOLUTION.

— SOURCE: MODERN TIRE DEALER

HENDRICKSON HAS LAUNCHED TIREMAAX TPMS, a hubcap-mounted trailer tire pressure monitoring solution.

TIREMAAX TPMS has been designed for seamless integration with Hendrickson's TIREMAAX PRO and PRO-LB tire pressure control systems.

Features and benefits include a hubcap-mounted design; integration into Hendrickson's TIREMAAX PRO and PRO-LB systems; clean, permanent installation that helps prevent loss or theft; no recalibration or tire dismounting needed during tire changes; seamless, real-time monitoring through a Bluetooth sensor that links to Hendrickson's WATCHMAN mobile app or approved telematics systems; larger capacity battery designed for longer service life; automatic tire pressure control, trailer tire pressure monitoring and suspension systems from Hendrickson for simplified support; and more.

"The TPMS Tire Pressure Monitoring System delivers real-time trailer tire pressure data via Bluetooth to leading telematics platforms or the Hendrickson WATCHMAN app, helping fleets reduce downtime and improve maintenance," according to Hendrickson officials.

"TIREMAAX TPMS makes tire health monitoring simple and reliable," says Matt Wilson, vice president of Hendrickson's Vehicle Technology Group. "It seamlessly integrates into TIREMAAX PRO and PRO-LB systems for easy installation."

"Smart trailer technology is no longer optional," says Wilson. "It's becoming the standard. TIREMAAX TPMS gives fleets the connectivity they need to move from reactive maintenance to proactive, data-driven decisions."

The sensor was engineered to eliminate complexity for fleets. "Fleets want technology that works for them, not against them," says Wilson. "Our hubcap-mounted TPMS design simplifies installation and delivers reliable data without adding complexity."

Wilson also emphasizes the role TIREMAAX TPMS will play as the industry advances toward integrated telematics.

"As the industry shifts toward predictive maintenance and integrated telematics, TIREMAAX TPMS is a key building block



for smarter and more efficient trailer operations."

For more info on Tiremaax in Canada:
ppandya@hendrickson-intl.com

RNR TIRE EXPRESS CANADA LAUNCH IN OSHAWA

— BY CHRISTIAN HINTON, TIRE REVIEW

RNR TIRE EXPRESS has signed its first international franchise agreement and will expand Canada operations with a new store under construction at 1080 Simcoe St. N in Oshawa. The location is expected to open in March and will focus on tire sales and custom wheel installation.

Business partners Rakesh Jegganolla and Sravan Sharma will lead the RNR Tire Canada debut. Jegganolla spent more than 13 years as a software engineer before entering franchising in 2020 in the childcare industry. Sharma brings more than a decade of experience in technology and consulting. After researching opportunities in Canada, the partners selected RNR to introduce its automotive retail model to Ontario.



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TSBC: APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR 2026 COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM, DEADLINE MARCH 31ST

THE TSBC COMMUNITY Grant Program is now accepting applications for 2026. This program supports communities across BC by providing financial assistance for projects that use BC recycled tire products to enhance public spaces, promote sustainability, and improve accessibility.

ABOUT TSBC COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM

The program encourages the use of BC recycled tire products in public, wheelchair-accessible projects and provides financial support to communities that incorporate these products. Its objective is to bring BC-manufactured products from recycled scrap tires “full circle” back to communities throughout the province.

Since its inception, the TSBC Community Grant Program has:

- Issued over \$6.5 million in grants
- Supported 360 projects
- Reached 96 communities across BC

These projects have made playgrounds safer, walking paths more accessible, and recreational spaces more inclusive, while diverting scrap tires from landfills.

BC’s scrap tire program is the oldest in Canada. Since 1991, over 127 million tires have been processed, demonstrating a proven commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: APPLYING FOR THE 2026 GRANT PROGRAM

Who is eligible to apply?

Not-for-profit organizations in BC, including municipalities, community groups, schools, and First Nations or Métis settlements.

What types of projects are eligible?

Projects using recycled tire products made in BC, fully public and wheelchair accessible, such as playgrounds, water parks, fitness areas, walkways, running tracks, and playing fields.

When can I apply?

Applications open January 5, 2026, and close March 31, 2026, end of day.

What about projects that require a tender process?

If your project requires a tender, do not submit your application until the process is complete.

Can I submit more than one application?

No. Only one application per applicant will be considered per year.

How much funding is available?

Grants are matching funds, up to \$30,000, requiring the applicant to contribute at least an equal amount.

How many projects receive funding each year?

The number of grants awarded depends on the annual program



budget. As a reference, 8 projects were awarded in 2024 and 11 projects in 2025.

What can grant funds be used for?

Grant funds may only be used for the purchase, freight, and professional installation of recycled tire products, including EPDM.

Can PST or GST be covered by the grant?

No. PST and GST are not eligible costs.

Can I apply for a project that is already completed?

No. Only projects not yet completed and ready for installation are eligible.

Can past recipients apply again?

Yes. Previous recipients are eligible to apply, provided all program requirements are met.

By when must the project be completed?

All projects must be completed within 18 months of grant approval.

Do projects require professional installation?

Yes. A warranty for both the installation and the recycled tire products must be provided. TSBC prefers BC-based installers.

Who are BC-based suppliers and installers of recycled tire products?

A list of known BC-based suppliers and installers is available at the bottom of the TSBC Community Grant Program webpage, under Tire Recycling in the Industry links section.

Is TSBC signage required?

Yes. All approved projects must install TSBC signage in a visible location and maintain it for at least three years.

How will applicants be notified?

Successful applicants will be contacted by email 4–6 weeks after the closing date, March 31, 2026.

How do I submit my application?

Applications must be submitted online via tsbc.ca using the provided Google form link.

The TSBC Community Grant Program is an opportunity for communities to create safer, more inclusive, and environmentally responsible spaces while supporting BC’s tire recycling industry. By participating, applicants help bring recycled tire products full circle, from BC scrap tires back to the communities that benefit from them.

THE ALIGNMENT PROBLEM NO ONE TALKS ABOUT

- PAM OAKES, TIRE BUSINESS

YOU MAY THINK this is about an alignment procedure, but it's not. I'm a stickler when it comes to tires. They are the first line of defence for proper handling and braking – especially on major metropolitan roadways, where nearly everyone behind the wheel seems determined to be first to the stoplight.

So, if I can gain even a quarter-inch advantage while braking – avoiding a collision after someone cuts in front of me – I'll take it.

But tires – and future "smart tires" – are only part of the equation. You also need proper alignment to ensure even tread wear.

Correct alignment guarantees that the vehicle, along with its Advanced Driver Assistance System / Autonomus Driving (ADAS/AD) sensor-fusion package, maintains the tire placement on the road as designed by the manufacturer.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR VEHICLE IS PROPERLY ALIGNED?

This is a two-part question: First, steering gear/suspension and, second, ADAS/AD components pointing forward at zero degrees. And how can a consumer be sure their vehicle meets autonomy-specification requirements?

There are five million automotive stories in the metropolitan area where I live. This is one.

Enter the pothole

Recently, I struck one of the city's infamous multi-patched potholes. I knew the impact on my steering gear and suspension warranted at least an alignment check – most likely a correction. Since my vehicle was still under its 12-month/12,000-mile warranty, I scheduled the earliest available appointment with a dealership.

Early Saturday, I arrived and met a new-to-me service adviser. I explained the situation – the infamous pothole – and why I needed an alignment. I requested before-and-after printouts, including SAI/IA readings and asked to ensure my right caster led the left by about half a degree (0.5-degrees) to compensate for the steeper road crown in the area.

Basic stuff, really.

I noticed, while requesting these few items, he was just nodding without taking notes.

His demeanor suggested I was just a woman who had "Googled" what to ask but didn't truly understand.

He then said the technician couldn't split the caster by half a degree because it had to remain within manufacturer specs. (What?)

That is when I asked to speak directly with the technician. The adviser told me the technician was highly qualified and knew what to do, and that "technicians don't talk to customers to avoid complications."

Not being from Missouri but still wanting to "see" what was about to unfold in the alignment bay, I found a spot along the outside wall with a perfect view of the stall. The technician noticed me watching, made eye contact and started a conversation.

I told him about the pothole – it was obvious from the GUI that the steering gear needed correction – and explained my caster request and need for printouts. We continued chatting, trading "war stories," while he worked.

Before long, the alignment was perfectly within spec. After disconnecting the equipment and completing a test drive, the vehicle was ready.

Or so I thought.

LACKING CRITICAL ALIGNMENT

During the final drive, an issue arose: the steering wheel was off-centre.

It wasn't the steering gear or suspension – the specs were spot on.

It wasn't the steering wheel positioning tool either – it hadn't malfunctioned or been installed incorrectly.

The culprit was far more common: the alignment rack itself, specifically the turntable plates.

Whether electrified or pinned, the anchor doesn't matter. Without properly maintained overlays, even the best technician can't deliver a centered steering wheel.

TURNTABLE TROUBLES

At the base of the problem lies a threefold deterioration of the turntable-plate support:

1. Driving onto the alignment rack with the mediums unlocked (electrified or pinned) causes the turntables to move to their

limits within the garter-bearings assembly under wheel torque. This stresses the plastic components.

2. Failing to clean up after debris falls into the turntable seams while performing other vehicle repairs.
3. Neglecting turntable maintenance to the point where the plates that hug the garter-bearing package become damaged and grooved beyond repair.

In the past, steel ball bearings supported the turntables; now plastic medium has replaced pressed steel. Plastic wears quickly, and bearings become oblong instead of round. Eventually, worn bearings carve patterns into the underside of the top plate, at which point replacement is the only option. Fortunately, garter-bearing kits are inexpensive and available at national parts stores versus purchasing a turntable-plate set from a vendor.

There's more

And I can't leave out part two of the scenario: ADAS/AD.

Remember, the entire purpose of alignment – even before ADAS – was to ensure the vehicle's nose points dead-ahead, zero degrees. My vehicle, loaded with ADAS/AD sensor-fusion, wasn't steering straight, but lane-keep-assist gave false positives.

The point is simple: the medium doesn't matter. What matters is the technician has properly functioning tools available to complete the ticket as there isn't a more discouraging turn-of-events when a job goes south due to faulty equipment.

ADAS FALSE POSITIVE

For vehicles equipped with a steering angle sensor (SAS), post-alignment recalibration is mandatory. With the steering wheel not aligned to the wheels (thanks to neglected turntables), the zero-reference point is compromised. The system interprets driving as if the driver is steering slightly left or right. False positives in electronic-stability control, adaptive-cruise control or park-assist can trigger unnecessary warnings or maneuvers, because the system believes all specs are correct.

A false-positive ADAS/AD function due to poor rack maintenance is not just inconvenient, it's a liability. A mis-calibrated, forward-collision warning system may fail to alert in time, and incorrect steering angle readings can throw off stability control.

From a business standpoint, this creates major risks: customer complaints, warranty issues or even lawsuits if safety systems fail after service. Many shops don't realize they are held to a high



professional standard – about 73 – under Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) for ADAS/AD-equipped vehicles, plus numerous ISO and UL standards.

MAINTENANCE OF PROPER EQUIPMENT IS CRITICAL.

Best practices include:

- Documenting regular maintenance;
- Checking rack-level accuracy;
- Cleaning and verifying turntable operation;
- Keeping aligner software updated; and
- Cleaning optics and targets with approved solutions.

That sticking turntable plate caused more than just an off-center steering wheel; it compromised an SAS recalibration. In today's shop, maintaining equipment is more than upkeep, it is a commitment to ADAS/AD safety and precision.

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BRIDGESTONE TO LAUNCH FIRST ICE-GRIP-CERTIFIED TIRE

BRIDGESTONE IS LAUNCHING THE ICEPEAK WINTER TIRE WITH ICE GRIP CERTIFICATION.

– BY KATHY MCCARRON, TIRE BUSINESS

THE NEW BRIDGESTONE Blizzak IcePeak tire with Ice Grip certification wasn't yet available to help motorists snowed-in by Winter Storm Fern, that blanketed the Southeast and Northeast U.S. in late January. But tire dealers will be able to start ordering the new winter tire in May in anticipation of fierce conditions next season.

The IcePeak made its debut to media during a driving event at the Bridgestone Winter Driving School, Jan. 21, at Steamboat Springs, where the tire was put through its paces on a snow-packed test course.

The IcePeak is Bridgestone's first tire to carry the Ice Grip designation for ice braking; it also carries the Three-Peak Mountain Snowflake (3PMS) mark for snow traction and acceleration.

The tire, which is replacing the Blizzak DMV 2 and WS 90, is described as "a jack of all trades" with a size range covering cars, light trucks, SUVs and minivans.

"It's a huge power line for us. It is meant to fit the whole car parc," Todd Chapman, senior manager, product strategy, for Bridgestone Americas, said.

Bridgestone said the IcePeak will be available in 107 sizes, ranging from 14- to 22-inch rim diameters, covering 97% of the car parc.

"This makes it easier for a consumer, as they can say, 'I just need a Blizzak. I need the best Blizzak.' It's the IcePeak."

As the first Bridgestone tire with double certification, the IcePeak offers longer wear life and greater durability than previous-generation products, along with lower rolling resistance, he said.

WINTER TIRE MARKET

Winter tires make up a small segment of the North America tire market, accounting for about 10 million units in sales a year, according to Bridgestone.

"While it seems like it's a small segment for us, it's a very important one," Chapman said.

The IcePeak is the latest iteration of the Bridgestone Blizzak studless winter tire line, which first debuted in 1982.

IcePeak joins the Blizzak LT with LT sizes and the Blizzak 6, launched last year, with higher-speed-rated sizes.



"We have a commanding brand presence there, and we want to continue that brand presence. Not only is it because Bridgestone has been so, so strong in that area, but along with that Canadian market, 40% of all tires sold in Canada are winter tires," Chapman said.

"When we talk about winter tires, specifically, we're talking about a tire that's designed for temperatures below 45 degrees. ... So, the rubber compounds that we're using on these tires are designed for those low temperatures. They still stay pliable. They still stay soft, even when the temperature is this cold outside. And the reason why that's important is the features that we put into the tread pattern design itself."

That includes biting edges for traction and a tread design that helps wick away the water from the icy surface, he said.

He said the tire is designed to get packed with snow, "because snow-on-snow traction is actually higher than rubber-on-snow traction."

In 2021 the Ice Grip symbol was introduced in the tire industry, denoting that a tire with the designation was 18% better in a braking test on ice than a standardized reference tire.

Any tire that earns the Ice Grip designation, also gets the 3PMS symbol.

The IcePeak is still in the pre-production stages, he said, with plans for multiple plants around the world to produce the line for its global launch.

WASHINGTON STATE CONSIDERS STUDDED TIRE BAN

THE WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION IS RECOMMENDING A PHASE-OUT OF STUDDED TIRES, CITING COST SAVINGS AND ROAD MAINTENANCE AS BENEFITS.

- BY MIKE MANGES, EDITOR, MODERN TIRE DEALER

WASHINGTON STATE ALLOWED the use of studded tires year-round until 1971, when lawmakers limited their use to November 1 through April 1 annually.

The Washington State Transportation Commission is recommending a phase-out of studded tires, citing cost savings and road maintenance as benefits.

According to a report from the Washington State Transportation Commission, "Washington state owns a transportation system that would cost over \$200 billion to replace today, making it critically important to maintain what we have. One simple thing that can be done to save the state between \$20 million to \$29 million annually would be to phase out the use of studded snow tires on public roadways.

"The current fee on studded tires of \$5 has generated an average of \$315,000 annually over the past five years, a fraction of the damage the tires cause to Washington's roadways. With affordable snow tire alternatives available today that provide an even higher

level of safety, the time is now to phase out studded tires and save our pavement."

In addition to phasing out studded tires, the commission is calling for Washington's current studded tire fee to increase from \$5 to \$50 per tire and says the fee should be instead called a "pavement impact fee," adding that "within five years of this fee increase, studded tires should be prohibited."

Washington State allowed the use of studded tires year-round until 1971, when lawmakers limited their use to November 1 through April 1 annually.

The state's department of transportation "recommends good winter traction tires as the best all-around winter driving solution due to their ability to handle multiple types of road conditions."



HONDA CIVIC CAPTURES AJAC CANADIAN CAR OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR

THE BUILT IN CANADA CIVIC ONCE AGAIN TAKES TOP HONOURS FROM THE AUTOMOBILE JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA. THIS IS CIVIC'S THIRD CANADIAN CAR OF THE YEAR AWARD IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

HONDA CANADA IS delighted to announce that the 2026 Honda Civic hybrid, sedan and hatchback, Canada's best-selling car for 26 of the past 28 years, has been named the 2026 Canadian Car of the Year (CCOTY) by the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (AJAC) for the second consecutive year. This is Civic's third CCOTY title in the past five years.

"We at Honda Canada are beaming with pride and are humbled at once again seeing the Civic take the title of Canadian Car of the Year. Winning in back-to-back years is an incredible achievement that takes a team of talented and dedicated people to achieve," says Emile Korkor, Assistant Vice President Honda Canada. "I want to thank our Canadian customers from coast to coast to coast, our local Honda dealers, our skilled associates that proudly build the

Civic right here in Canada, and the AJAC jurors that voted for it once again this year."

Civic defending its title as AJAC Canadian Car of the Year comes on the heels of it winning even more accolades, including a 2026 Car and Driver Editors' Choice Award and The Drive Best Value for 2026 Award.



MONTREAL MAYOR SAYS HER CAR WAS TOWED, BLAMES POTHOLES FOR TWO FLAT TIRES

- BY THE CANADIAN PRESS

AFTER SAYING SHE blew a pair of tires on one of her city's busiest streets, Montreal Mayor Soraya Martinez Ferrada is pledging to tackle what's causing the problem.

"So there were two potholes on Notre-Dame street," Martinez Ferrada said in a video posted on social media Monday evening. "We are going to bring in solutions, but in the meantime, we are being towed. And I know it just doesn't make sense what's on these roads."

Over the past few weeks, Montreal drivers have been grappling with worsening road conditions after a January warm spell led to the rapid formation of potholes across the city.

Martinez Ferrada broke into laughter on the video as a tow-truck driver standing next to her commented on her talking about the infamous potholes and then running into them.

She was driving on a street that includes a section that was named Montreal's worst road in CAA Québec's 2025 online citizen vote.

"Two tires, two flat tires," said Martinez Ferrada, alongside the tow-truck driver.

While this is the first winter since Martinez Ferrada was elected in November, the potholes have caused long-standing bumps and headaches for Montreal drivers, according to CAA Québec, which

is often responding to calls and providing services for the affected motorists.

"The condition of the roadways and highways in the greater Montreal area is a cause for concern," said CAA Québec spokesperson Simon Bourassa.

The mayor's office has not yet shared details of how she plans to fix the problem.

Martinez Ferrada has said the city is struggling to keep up with the potholes in recent weeks because it doesn't have enough functioning equipment to repair the damage.

CAA Québec said flat-tire service calls in Montreal and Laval jumped 75 per cent from Jan. 9 to 20 compared with last year. By comparison, the Quebec City region saw an increase of 35 per cent, while the provincial increase was 50 per cent.

Across Quebec, vehicles were towed in six per cent of all the calls for flat-tires during that period, Bourassa added. "It's significant. We didn't notice that before," he said.

He said the increase in towing is linked to the severity of damage to the vehicles, as well as the fact that many newer vehicles no longer carry spare tires and instead rely on repair kits, which are often ineffective.

USTMA FORECAST: 2026 WILL SEE RECORD HIGH TIRE SHIPMENTS

USTMA PREDICTS THAT 2025 TIRE SHIPMENTS SHOULD BE ON PAR WITH RECORD-SETTING 2024 NUMBERS.

-TIRE BUSINESS STAFF

A RECORD NUMBER of tires will be shipped in the U.S. this year, the U.S. Tire Manufacturers Association (USTMA) projected in its latest forecast, released March 4.

The USTMA projects 338.9 million units will be shipped in 2026. If the forecast holds true, it would surpasses the previous record of 337.3 million units in 2024.

For comparison, USTMA said that last year 336.3 million units were shipped in the U.S. Prior to the COVID pandemic, 332.7 million units were shipped in 2019.

Replacement passenger, light truck and medium truck tire shipments are also projected to increase by 0.6%, 0.8% and 0.2%,



respectively, with a total increase of 1.7 million units.

Compared with 2025, original equipment (OE) shipments for passenger, light truck and medium truck tires are expected to change by 0.8%, 1.2%, and 8.3%, respectively, with a total increase of 0.8 million units.

SUMITOMO TIRE COMPANIES ADOPT DUNLOP NAME

—BY SHANE HOOVER, TIRE BUSINESS

KOBE, Japan — **SUMITOMO RUBBER NORTH AMERICA INC. (SRNA)** will be known as Dunlop Tires North America Inc. starting in January, as it and other Sumitomo subsidiaries around the world adopt the Dunlop name.

Sumitomo Rubber Industries Ltd. (SRI) announced the name changes on Nov. 27.

Kobe, Japan-based SRI finalized a \$735 million deal to buy Goodyear's rights to the Dunlop brand in May. SRI and Goodyear had previously controlled Dunlop as part of a global alliance that ended in 2015, with each company retaining certain regional rights.

SRI's purchase gives it the Dunlop trademark and other rights for four-wheel tires in Europe, North America and Oceania.

The deal did not include the rights to four-wheel tires in India, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, nor did it cover motorcycle tires in India, Europe and Oceania.

In a statement, SRI said it aimed to enhance the value of the Dunlop brand globally and was changing the trade names of its overseas sales subsidiaries to include the Dunlop name.

During a Nov. 4 event in Las Vegas, SRNA CEO and President Darren Thomas discussed plans for the Dunlop brand in North America.

Thomas said Dunlop can compete as a low-Tier 1, high-Tier 2 brand, positioned above SRNA's Falken brand, except for Falken light truck tires, and that the Dunlop brand should be a "hustler" and a "fighting brand," as it aims for a 5% to 10% share of Tier 1.

Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.-based SRNA plans to launch the Dunlop Blue Response A/S touring all season tire in December.



TOYO TIRES LAUNCHES M165 COMMERCIAL VAN ALL-SEASON

TOYO ANNOUNCES THE all-new Toyo® M165™ commercial van all-season tire. "Built to meet the rigorous stop-and-go demands of last-mile deliveries, this tire offers fuel efficiency, and long even wear, making it an excellent choice for commercial vans seeking to reduce operating costs," says Toyo.

"The tire's new specialized cap compound, sidewall protector, and e-balance design optimize traction and reduce sway for tall commercial vans, which are increasingly popular for same-day and next-day deliveries. The M165 is built to withstand the demanding conditions of last-mile delivery applications, which often carry bulky, heavy loads, and face excessive wear from accelerating, braking, and curbing. This is the latest addition to Toyo's commercial tire lineup, set to replace the H08+."

"The M165 will benefit from new specialized compounds that promote even treadwear under frequent stop-and-go activity while increasing fuel efficiency. The all-season tread design features interlocking tread blocks and multi-wave sipes, which enhance stability by reducing block movement and provide traction in both wet and dry conditions. The advanced casing, built with e-balance technology, helps improve stability to reduce vehicle sway, resists damaging heat buildup, and improves retreadability, extending the life of the casing. Sidewall shields are incorporated into the overall design to further protect the casing from curb damage."

"The newly launched M165 commercial van tire is built with the focus of helping fleets see higher removal miles while reducing irregular wear," said Jordan Vastine, product planning and technical services manager, Toyo Tire U.S.A. Corp. "We are confident the M165 will complement the already proven Toyo commercial product lineup."

"The new M165 commercial van all-season tire will be produced in a variety of 16-inch wheel sizes for both D- and E-load ratings and be available this Spring," adds the company. "Popular vehicle fitments include the Ford Transit, Ram ProMaster, and the Rivian RCV."

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