

THE TRACKER

THE PUBLICATION FOR TIRE PROFESSIONALS
FROM WESTERN CANADA TIRE DEALERS



Season's Greetings

GETTING A GRIP ON WINTER

WESTERN CANADA TIRE DEALERS

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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)...

The Tracker editor - Tim Pawsey - timp@wctd.ca

WCTD - The Tracker
65 Woodbine Road, Sherwood Park, AB T8A 4A7
PHONE 780.554.9259
EMAIL rayg@wctd.ca WEB www.wctd.ca



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65 Woodbine Road, Sherwood Park, AB T8A 4A7
Phone 780-554-9259 Email: rayg@wctd.ca

DIRECTORS 2025-2026

BRITISH COLUMBIA

PAUL MCALDUFF - TIRELAND PERFORMANCE CENTRE

300 East Esplanade, North Vancouver, BC V7L 1A4
Phone: 604-980-1578 Email: tirelandperformance@telus.net

TIM HOLLETT - B&H TIRECRAFT CHEMAINUS

PO Box 240, Chemainus, BC V0R 1K0
Phone: 250-246-4731 E-mail: bhtire@shaw.ca

PETER FOREMAN - FOREMAN AUTO

5718 - 198 Street, Langley BC V3A 7C7
Phone: 604-836-6002 E-mail: peter@foremanouto.ca

ALBERTA

ANDREW BOULTON - KAL TIRE

PO Box 1240, 2501 - 48 Avenue, Vernon, BC V1T 6N6
Phone: 780-910-4650 Email: andrew_boulton@kaltire.com

JAMES O'REILLY - TRAIL TIRE GROUP

4717 99th St., Edmonton, AB, T6E4Y1
Phone: 778-215-7314 E-mail: James.OReilly@trailtire.com

LAINE COLMAN - COSTAR

2148 Premier Way, Sherwood Park AB T8H 2L3
Phone: 780-416-7080 E-mail: laine@costar.ca

NEAL SHYMKO - TIRE VILLAGE LTD.

8805 - 156 Street, Edmonton, AB T5R 1Y5
Phone: 780-484-1184 E-mail: tirevillage@shaw.ca

ROBERT LABOSSIERE - TIRECRAFT

14404 - 128 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5L 3H6
Phone: 780-509-1657 Email: rlabossiere@ntdcanada.com

JERRY RENTZ - INTEGRA TIRE WAINWRIGHT

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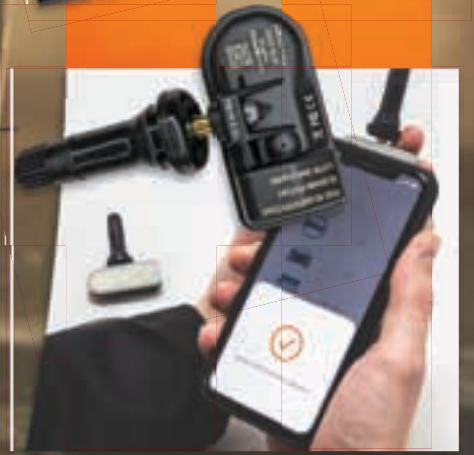
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I HOPE EVERYONE'S had a great year. And that you were able to get in some serious summer holidays, enjoying warm, beautiful sunny days with friends and family. But now, for sure, winter has truly arrived—our busiest season of the year!

So far, to say the least, 2025 has been another very interesting year. I'm not going to get into too many details. But I think everybody knows what I'm talking about. For five years now, ever since Covid hit us back in early 2020, the world has been in constant change. Our industry has been affected as much as every other industry in our country, from so many different angles; so we have to continue as an organization to constantly adapt and adjust to improve our business models.

BOOK YOUR TIA TRAINING NOW!

We at WCTD are always exploring ways to improve, so we can all benefit together by becoming more proficient. One of those ways is that we are constantly expanding our offering of TIA Training programs. I cannot over-emphasize the importance not only of being aware of the timing and location of these programs but making sure that the technicians in your organizations are enrolled and can benefit accordingly.

All of us who've been in this business long enough likely know someone who has been injured (or worse), in a tire or service related accident. Tragically, it may have been the result of an unforeseen series of events, a shortcut or carelessness—or simply not knowing or being aware of the hazards at hand that lead up to the accident.

That's why keeping your techs at all levels up-to-date through training is even more critical. For example, it's easy to start rookie employees in the shop simply doing light duties and service while they learn or, perhaps, shadowing a trained veteran.

However, even when a process is in place whereby every new employee takes some sort of training course or upgrade, despite guidelines in place, rules can wind up being bent, especially when we're busy or under pressure. It happens. We must be diligent in establishing and then, above all, adhering to training and safe practice programs.

A critical first step is to educate new employees of servicing hazards and dangers. The second step is to minimize exposure to those hazards both in the shop and on the road.

One of our members recalls a service tech telling a story from several years ago, when he first started out in the industry. The (as yet untrained) tech had never been taught what zippers were, and the likely devastating outcome of a zipper incident.

As he was airing the truck tire back up the tech put his ear to the tire because he heard this strange popping sound. Luckily, it

wasn't until after he had straightened up and walked around the other side of the trailer that the tire exploded.

Thankfully, we've come a long way since those days. Zipper rupture explosions are on the decline as the industry learns how to detect and defuse them. However, anecdotes like this serve as firm reminders as to why keeping techs well-trained and up to date is so crucial—not only for their own, personal safety but for the good of your business overall. I urge you to make plans to enrol in those upcoming courses asap!



Tim Hollett
President, WCTD

CHALLENGING CHANGE

I have to say that I'm truly, very proud of how all our members, have responded to the changes and (often difficult) challenges of these past few years. As we are now in our busiest season (the fall, with its snow-tire change-over and peak maintenance services much in demand) I wish everyone, above all, a safe but also profitable last quarter.

And how about those Blue Jays, Eh? By the time this issue of The Tracker is in your hands the World Series will have been played and the champions already crowned. As the old saying goes: "Work hard and play hard." After a hard day's work, I hope you got to sit down, relax and enjoy watching the Blue Jays—hopefully right through to the World Series.

WCTD is constantly working hard towards improving in all areas of our business. We have a strong board of directors, all of whom directly work in or are closely connected to our industry. It's a dynamic and diverse group of people with no shortage of hands-on experience in every sector of the industry, from retail to wholesale and beyond. They selflessly share with us their knowledge and help chart the course to make any changes when necessary to improve in all areas.

As we know, Canada and the world are in constant change. Moving forward I believe we can continue to improve by communicating with all stakeholders within our industry.

I hope everyone has a great fall sales season. And yes, work hard. But, above all, stay safe, happy and healthy.

Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,

Tim Hollett
President WCTD

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RAY'S REFLECTIONS

RESILIENCE RULES!

AS OF THIS year I have been associated with the tire and automotive industry for some 55 years. I've been lucky to have witnessed a great number of changes in tire technology, innovations and equipment, not to mention the way business is done. One thing's for sure, the tire and automotive industry is always evolving. And I've learned also that our dealers are truly experts when it comes to adapting as needed.

Technology over the years has impacted our business world dramatically. From specialized equipment to the vehicles we work on, tire technology, electronics, computer systems are changing almost daily, and we adjust and learn accordingly. That is, as I said before, our dealers are resilient. With the advent of electric vehicles and autonomous cars, we will continue to see even more changes, and we will adapt as always.

The way we do business will never cease to shift and challenge. People are doing more online research and online shopping. Let's make sure we are able to accommodate these new online shoppers. Mobile tire service may become more prevalent in years to come. We must be ready to respond to any eventuality.

TIME TO STEP UP & LEARN FROM YOUR PEERS

Over the years I have owned my own shops, worked for manufacturers, worked for distributors and worked for and helped develop a retail tire chain. Today I am still involved as your Executive Director of the Western Canada Tire Dealers. Prior to becoming executive director, I was a board member off and on for nine years.

Being on the WCTD board has been both a pleasure and a huge learning experience for me. Listening to my peers and learning



from them was very beneficial. It is an experience that I would highly recommend. In fact, if you are genuinely interested in contributing to WCTD's success story, step up to become a board member. And if you know of anyone else who you feel would be a strong independent dealer board director be sure to give me a call or e-mail me at rayg@wctd.ca

Over those 55 years I have had the opportunity to work with, compete against and socialize with some of the most amazing people in this industry. Looking back through the WCTD Hall of Fame recipients, I would say that I have associated one way or another with most of the recipients. It's been a true honour. These people were big supporters, always active in our association.

We are now looking at the second and third generation participating in our industry. I am sure that there are a lot more individuals (dealers) who should be inducted into our WCTD Hall Of Fame. Let me know directly who you would like to nominate.

WCTD had a successful board meeting in September. The board has made a commitment to increase TIA training and will be looking to bring on more benefits to our members. We also welcomed two new members; Jerry Rentz from Integra Tire, Wainwright, AB and Peter Forman of Forman Automotive, Langley, BC.

EXPANDED TRAINING: STAYING CURRENT IS CRUCIAL

Good training is critical to the overall success of your business. We are in the process of expanding our TIA Training, offering Earthmover Tire Service Training. Also, we will be expanding our Commercial Tire Service level 300 and Automotive Tire Service level 300 training offering more courses. Please review the tentative schedule on page 16 of this issue and add your technician's name to the list. Depending on the number of dealers wanting to participate, we can expand this offer even further.

I hope you are enjoying a truly productive winter tire season. Above all, on behalf of the WCTD Board of Directors, I wish the very best to you and your families for the holidays!

Ray Geleta - WCTD Executive Director
rayg@wctd.ca



Ray Geleta
Executive Director,
WCTD

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FALL CATRA MEETINGS EMPHASIZE WESTERN CANADA COLLABORATION

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF TIRE RECYCLING AGENCIES (CATRA) hosted its 2025 Annual Members Meeting in Calgary, AB, welcoming leaders from all 10 member jurisdictions, partners and industry stakeholders. The two-day event (October 6-7) served as a strategic forum for collaboration, committee updates and roundtable discussions. All aimed at enhancing program performance, sharing best practices and addressing emerging trends in end-of-life (EOL) tire management.

Western Canada Tire Dealers is represented at each tire recycling agency in each of the four western provinces - British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Tire dealers' and distributors' concerns, issues and successes are a valuable piece in the successful collection and processing of EOL tires in each western province, thereby eradicating EOL tire piles, disposal in landfills, and protecting and providing awareness of environmental issues.

Building on the progress highlighted in CATRA's 2024 Annual Report, the meeting marked the second year of the organization's three-year strategic plan, reinforcing its commitment to delivering meaningful value through shared learning, data-driven insights and national collaboration.

Sessions aligned with CATRA's strategic priorities and Value Areas, featuring updates on performance metrics, harmonized compliance reviews, data and reporting initiatives and national end-market development. Members also reviewed 2024 financials, approved the 2025 budget and identified new opportunities to advance circular economy outcomes.

Keynote Guest speaker Stephanie Mull, Executive Director of the Tire Recycling Foundation delivered a presentation on expanding circular economy innovation and maximizing value within end-of-life tire markets. The Tire Recycling Foundation is a broad-based, whole value chain initiative, led by the U.S. Tire Manufacturers Association (USTMA) and the Tire Industry Association (TIA).

HOW IT WORKS

Each jurisdiction gave reports on updates and progress in each of their provinces, as well as challenges put forward for awareness or discussion purposes. Members further participated in an interactive roundtable focused on delivering measurable impact and strengthening Canada's tire recycling network.

PASSING THE GAVEL

As the meeting neared wrap-up Tuesday afternoon, CATRA Chairperson Steve Meldrum, CEO, eTracks Tire Management Systems, formally passed the CATRA gavel to incoming Chair



Ed Gugenheimer, CEO, Alberta Recycling Management Authority (ARMA). Meldrum had served as Chair for several years and had led the CATRA organization through growth and development in an impressionable number of areas. It was fitting that the gavel passed at the 2025 meeting, as Gugenheimer and his ARMA team in Alberta had proven to be excellent hosts for this year's annual meeting. Members expressed their appreciation to Steve for his time served, and welcomed Ed to the Chair position.

The meeting underscored CATRA's leadership in environmental accountability and performance tracking. Updates on the Life Cycle Assessment initiative showcased the measurable benefits of tire recycling, with over 460,000 tonnes of end-of-life tires collected and 409,000 tonnes transformed into new products in 2024, reflecting the collective impact of CATRA's national programs.

Through peer exchange, shared data and collaborative strategy, CATRA and its members continue to drive innovation, expand end markets and advance a sustainable, circular economy for end-of-life tires across Canada.

For more information, visit 2024 CATRA Annual Report <http://catraonline.ca/>

Submitted by:

Melissa Carlaw, VP, Communications and Customer Sustainability, eTracks

Ken Essex, Chair, Tire Stewardship Manitoba, Past President WCTD

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

WCTD IS DELIGHTED to announce the recipients of this year's Academic Scholarships. This school year marks the 22nd anniversary of the scholarship program. We estimate that during this time the association has contributed some \$190,000 towards helping family members achieve their goals and career aspirations. The successful students come from communities throughout WCTD's wide geographic membership area. They're all exceptional individuals pursuing a broad cross-section of studies. We salute them and wish them every success in the coming year—and well beyond.



KEIRA BURCHBY

I have grown up in the small town of Athabasca my entire life. For as long as I can remember, much of my time has been spent at the Athabasca Dance Studio putting in as many hours a week as possible. I went on to complete my Cecchetti Standard Six Classical Ballet examination and received multiple studio and festival awards throughout the years. As a young ballet student, I was also awarded a scholarship to the Edmonton School of Ballet Summer School. Between that and school, I also enjoy hunting and fishing as well as being with my horses.

When I was 14 I started working at Kal Tire in Athabasca after school. Having the responsibility of a job on top of my schooling and dance schedule definitely taught me to manage my time effectively and has instilled a good work ethic.

I have recently moved to Olds, Alberta to begin my studies in Environmental Science and Technology. Growing up near the bush and enjoying many outdoor activities, it has been

an interest of mine to pursue a career in this for quite some time.

For the next two years I will be at Olds finishing my diploma. My goal then is to transfer to University of Alberta to get my degree. This scholarship will be important to help me realize that goal over these next four years. Post-secondary education quickly gets expensive. Having these funds helps get me to my goal a little more easily. A huge 'thank you' to Western Canada Tire Dealers for this opportunity.



CLAIRE PENNER

I grew up in Coldstream, British Columbia. After graduating from Kalamalka Secondary School, I am now pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Victoria. Throughout high school, I found excitement in all areas of science. While I'm still deciding on a specific major, my goal is to pursue a career that can make a meaningful impact in people's lives.

Beyond academics, I've always been passionate about staying active. Whether it's playing sports like basketball, soccer, rugby, ultimate frisbee, or ringette, or simply hiking and exploring the outdoors, I enjoy staying fit. My experiences have taught me the importance of teamwork and perseverance, both of which have shaped who I am today.

In addition, I spent a year volunteering at Vernon Jubilee Hospital as a Youth Volunteer. This experience taught me invaluable lessons about compassion and empathy and strengthened my desire to pursue a career in healthcare or

medical research. I am particularly interested in the fields of biology and psychology. I hope to one day make a difference through research. Receiving this scholarship is a huge honour and will greatly relieve some of the financial pressures of my education, allowing me to focus more on my studies and career goals.



RHIANNAN PHILLIPS

I am currently 18 years of age. I grew up in the small town of Killarney, Manitoba. While growing up, I was really involved in sports, specifically hockey. I have traveled all over Canada to play the sport I love. When I was fifteen, I moved to Pilot Mound, Manitoba, for two years to be a student-athlete at the Pilot Mound Hockey Academy. In my free time, I enjoy going for walks, cooking, baking, and spending time with my friends and family.

During my years of high school, I achieved a few academic awards. They include Honour Roll with Distinction from Grades 9 to 12, two CSSHL All-Academic Awards while in Pilot Mound, and I received the Governor General's award at my Grade 12 graduation. Recently, I moved away from home to attend Brandon University to obtain a Bachelor of Science Degree.

Once I graduate from BU, I plan to attend Medical School to become an anesthesiologist. This scholarship fund will assist me with the financial end of schooling. This generous donation has allowed me to feel more financially prepared to cover the costs of my tuition. In turn, I feel more equipped and ready to begin my university journey!



NEERA RAIN

This September I started my first year at KPU (Kwantlen Polytechnic University) in the psychology program. I have been studying, working and becoming more independent with every day. What I have been working on most however is my physical and mental health. Since graduation, I have focused more on fitness, and learning how having better physical health can lead to better mental health. I like to dance, read, draw and play games with family when relaxing after a long day.

The money received from WCTD is genuinely a blessing, as university is expensive. I'm focusing on saving up to hopefully move out in 1-2 years and start my own independent life. It's been very reassuring not have to stress about the costs of schooling for this semester with the money received. I'd truly like to thank my parents—and, of course, WCTD for this opportunity.

PLAN AHEAD!

It's never too soon to be thinking about next year's scholarship awards. As to just who's eligible to apply? Any immediate family member (son, daughter or spouse) or legal ward of a person who is a full time permanent employee, for at least one year, by a company that is a current voting member of WCTD and has been a member in good standing for the previous three years.

The applicant must have been accepted to attend an accredited Canadian post-secondary institution and have registered for classes for the upcoming semester. All members of the association in good standing are invited to apply on behalf of eligible family members! Even more important, please circulate this information widely within your company or employee group. Full details and more information are available at wctd.ca, under Membership Benefits.



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MAJORITY OF CANADA'S DRIVERS PRIORITIZE SAFETY AMID HARSHER WINTERS DESPITE RISING COST OF LIVING: TRAC SURVEY

THREE QUARTERS SAY EXTREME WEATHER PATTERNS MAKE WINTER TIRES MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

THREE QUARTERS OF Canadian motorists (76 per cent) believe extreme winter weather events related to Canada's changing climate have made winter tires more important than ever, according to a new Probe Research survey commissioned by the Tire and Rubber Association of Canada. More than four in five (84 per cent) say driving a vehicle equipped with winter tires has saved them from an accident or loss of control.

"The reality is that winter tires give drivers a clear safety advantage, better equipping them to handle the sudden and severe weather events we're seeing..."

"With climate challenges affecting Canadian winters, drivers are rightly concerned about safety on the roads,"

"Most drivers who use winter tires tell us their winter tires have helped them avoid dangerous situations. Their experiences reaffirm what we've long known..."

"Over the past few decades, winter tire use has grown remarkably across Canada, and became a true road safety success story. This progress comes thanks to the..."

"However, education continues to play a vital role, as three quarters of drivers opting out of winter tires believe all-season tires can sufficiently handle..."

GROWTH CONTINUES

With weather patterns becoming increasingly unpredictable, winter tire usage continues to grow. Across Canada usage now stands at 80 per cent, showing a 2-point increase from last year and a 12-point increase over the last decade.

The study also reveals that 81 per cent of drivers believe winter tires are an important investment despite the rising cost of living. However, current financial pressures are having an impact. About one in three drivers (32 per cent) say they are now less likely to buy winter tires because of increased financial burdens.

SAFETY FIRST

"With climate challenges affecting Canadian winters, drivers are rightfully concerned about safety on the roads," says Carol Hochu, president and CEO of TRAC.

"Most drivers who use winter tires tell us their winter tires have helped them avoid dangerous situations. Their experiences reaffirm what we've long known: winter tires deliver the traction and control drivers need to stay safe in cold-weather conditions. It's a powerful reminder that winter tires are an important safety investment. And even with rising living costs, more drivers recognize their value and understand that winter tires are essential for navigating Canadian



winter safely and staying in control in unpredictable weather on frigid Canadian roads."

Canadian drivers cite protecting their family as the top reason for using winter tires (70 per cent) while a third (33 per cent) cite winter tires being mandatory in their province. Other reasons for investing in winter tires are lower insurance premiums (24 per cent), advice from family and friends (18 per cent), and advice from retailers (10 per cent).

The most common reasons for not using winter tires are the belief that all-season tires are good enough (75 per cent), cost (25 per cent), and reduced driving in winter (24 per cent).

A SAFETY SUCCESS STORY

"Over the past few decades, winter tire use has grown remarkably across Canada, and became a true road safety success story. This progress comes thanks to the combined efforts of governments, industry, road safety organizations, and all other stakeholders. Together, they have helped make winter tires recognized as a vital road safety feature and continue to educate drivers about their benefits. Even with rising living costs, it's important that Canadians continue to prioritize the proven safety advantages of winter tires," says Hochu.

"However, education continues to play a vital role, as three quarters of drivers opting out of winter tires believe all-season tires can sufficiently handle winter conditions," adds Hochu. "The reality is that winter tires give drivers a clear safety advantage, better equipping them to handle the sudden and severe weather



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events we're seeing more often."

REGIONAL FINDINGS:

- In Atlantic Canada 95 per cent of drivers now use winter tires
- Winter tire usage in Ontario stands at 77 per cent
- In Manitoba and Saskatchewan 70 per cent use winter tires
- Alberta's usage rate is 70 per cent
- Usage stands at 64 per cent of British Columbia drivers

RELY ON THE THREE-PEAK MOUNTAIN SNOWFLAKE SYMBOL (3PMS)

Motorists have a broad range of options for winter driving. TRAC recommends winter tire shoppers rely on the Three-Peak Mountain Snowflake Symbol (3PMS). This symbol verifies the tire meets or exceeds Transport Canada's minimum snow traction threshold.

TIRE OPTIONS FOR WINTER

Drivers have three choices for winter driving: all-season tires; all-season tires with the 3PMS symbol, and dedicated winter tires designed exclusively for winter. Selecting the right tire can mean the difference between a surefooted winter motoring experience and a nervous drive. To learn more about winter tire options visit tracanada.ca

WHY DEDICATED WINTER TIRES ARE BEST

Driving on all-season tires in winter months results in longer stopping distances and compromised handling when temperatures fall below 7°C. All-season tires with 3PMS offer moderately better traction than other all-season tires. However, they are designed for occasional, light-to-medium snowfalls and may not provide the grip needed for severe winter driving conditions common on Canadian roads.

Dedicated winter tires feature softer tread compounds that retain their elasticity even in extremely cold temperatures. They provide superior traction and significantly shorter stopping distances in all winter driving conditions from icy, slushy, and snow-covered roads to cold, dry pavement. Dedicated winter tires are the best performers and are by far the safest choice.

TRAC'S WINTER TIRE COST CALCULATOR

Use TRAC's Winter Tire Cost Calculator to compare the costs of equipping a vehicle with a single set of tires (such as all-season/summer/all-season with 3PMS) versus the choice of adding a second set of dedicated winter tires (either with or without extra rims/wheels).

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Probe Research conducted an online survey of 1,069 Canadian drivers between October 6-11, 2025, using an online panel of Canadians. A probability sample of this size yields a margin of error of +/- 3.10%, 19 times out of 20.

WCTD / TIA TRAINING UPDATE

Western Canada Tire Dealers will be offering TIA Training for 2026 as follows:

Earthmover Tire Service Installer training.

WCTD now has a trainer available specifically to teach and train this EMT program. We are currently looking to put on this important program in early 2026 in both Kamloops and Edmonton, assuming the response is positive. More information with dates locations and costs will be posted on our website after November 30th.

Commercial Tire Service Level 300 Training.

Tentative dates and locations for the TIA Commercial Tire service Level 300 training are: January 13,14,15 in Victoria, BC; January 20, 21, 22 in Vancouver, BC; February 2, 3, 4 in Vernon BC; February 9,10,11 in Calgary AB; February 16,17, 18 in Edmonton, AB; March 10,11,12 in Grande Prairie, AB

Automotive Tire Service Level 300 Training.

Tentative dates and locations for the TIA Automotive Tire service Level 300 training are: February 4,5,6 in Vernon, BC; February 11,12,13 in Calgary, AB; February 18,19, 20 in Edmonton, AB.

Again, to book a spot in any of these training programs please contact Ray Geleta 780-554-9259 / rayg@wctd.ca or Rob Labossiere 587-341-5655 / robl@wctd.ca



OK TIRE CEO MIELKO PUSHES GROWTH

— BY SHANE HOOVER — @CRAIN.COM

WITH A SHARP focus on its retail, OK Tire, Canada's largest independently owned franchise group of tire and automotive repair shops, is looking to grow.

"I want to be (at) 400 stores in less than three years," new President and CEO Brian Mielko said, explaining his vision for the company.

Right now, the Surrey-based franchise group has more than 325 independently owned and operated stores coast-to-coast, and Mielko has criss-crossed Canada four times to meet with dealers since joining OK Tire in June.

OK Tire set the foundation for growth in May, when it turned its tire distribution operation over to Groupe Touchette Inc., the biggest Canadian-owned tire distributor.

Having entered what Mielko calls OK Tire 2.0, the company has a renewed emphasis on the independent dealers at the core of its history and business model.

OK TIRE 1.0

OK Tire started in 1953 when a small group of independent tire shops worked together to leverage their buying power.

That grew into a franchise group with 13 warehouses and more than 300 stores.

The business model worked well for a long time, Mielko said, but the retail tire sector has grown more complex.

For instance, a dozen years ago, the average vehicle in Canada was 8.5 years old and a tire store that stocked 100 sizes was well supplied, Mielko said. Today, the average vehicle age is 12.5 years, meaning dealers must stock more legacy sizes while keeping up with new sizes and applications.

"You now have, on average, 350 sizes per tire brand, and you need to stock not just one, not just 10, you need to stock many brands, and that business model therefore changes," Mielko said. "There was a time where you could be a retailer and a distributor. I think those times are over, at least in tires in Canada, and you're seeing that trend across the U.S."

He acknowledged OK Tire has struggled with distribution, causing its dealer network to weaken and satisfaction to drop. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath spotlighted issues with distribution, which is a challenge in a country of 41



Brian Mielko
President and CEO,
OK Tire

million residents spread over 3.8 million square miles, with severe weather and distinct regional markets.

"You're either a distributor or you're a retailer, and we made a decision to be a retailer," Mielko said.

PLAN FOR GROWTH

With the Groupe Touchette partnership in place — giving OK Tire access to Touchette's 45-plus distribution centres across Canada — the company has entered OK Tire 2.0.

The next step is making sure OK Tire's existing dealers are happy and excited for the future.

When he talks to dealers, their first request is to get tires on time and at the price point they need; their second request is help being better managers and staying ahead of trends, which OK Tire will assist with through marketing and training programs, Mielko said.

OK Tire also plans to use its coast-to-coast footprint to leverage partnerships in other areas, such as auto parts and oil supply, he said.

Taking those steps will put the company in position to grow toward Mielko's 400-store goal and beyond.

Most OK Tire franchisees have a single store. The biggest franchisee runs 13 locations. OK Tire is privately held and doesn't release sales figures, but its sales are split evenly between the passenger and commercial sectors, including tires for trucking, agriculture and mining, Mielko said.

There are thousands of independent tire dealers who could potentially join OK Tire. The franchise group has an 11% share of available locations across Canada, and is strong in the western provinces of British Columbia and Alberta, as well as the eastern Maritime provinces, but weaker in Quebec and Ontario, he said.

To grow, OK Tire will add stores in communities where it doesn't yet do business, as well as in towns where it already has a presence, and help franchisees add locations, Mielko said.

"We've got a great business model," he said. "We have an entrance package that, in my opinion, is second to none. Cost of joining the family is very reasonable. The benefits are substantial in the short and the long term."

CHANGING INDUSTRY

The 52-year-old Mielko grew up in Burlington, Ontario, and started his career in consumer packaged goods with Coca-Cola, Unilever, Mattel and Procter & Gamble. It was a job that put him in regular contact with retail franchises, usually grocery stores. From there, Mielko joined Dynamic Tire, which later became Sailun Tire Americas, before becoming branch president last year for Jiangsu General Science Technology Co. Ltd.

In leading OK Tire, Mielko's career has come full circle.

"I've been nothing but a franchise guy for most of my career, so to take this role on, it's a dream job for me," he said.

He knows the company is looking to grow at a time when tire and auto service is changing in Canada.

It used to be shop owners could simply offer tire service and repairs, but to be profitable now, they need to go beyond tires and offer mechanical repairs, Mielko said.

Consolidation is another industry trend making it harder for shop owners to stay independent.

"My message to many of the independent owners out there: Becoming part of a banner is going to be, I wouldn't call it a necessity, but in a lot of cases, an extremely important way for you to stay competitive and profitable for Canadians," Mielko said.

HELPING CUSTOMERS

Those industry trends are unfolding in a Canadian economy hit hard by inflation.

"Housing costs, car costs, food," Mielko said, ticking through them. "Savings are at an all-time low, debts at an all-time high."

Canadians need help, he said, and OK Tire dealers can give their customers relief.

"They need someone that they can go to for their automobiles, that they can trust, and I know that OK has become what it is over the last 70-plus years because we are the brand and the people that Canadians can trust," Mielko said, "And we're going to leverage that, we're going to expand that, we're going to keep our owners at the forefront of bringing solutions that work."

NOKIAN TYRES TO SPONSOR WORLD HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS

- TIRE BUSINESS STAFF

NOKIAN TYRES HAS been named an official sponsor of the 2026 and 2027 International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) Ice Hockey World Championship.

The inventor of the winter tire has become an official sponsor in the world's top winter sport.

Nokian Tyres P.L.C. has been named an official sponsor of the 2026 and 2027 International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) Ice Hockey World Championship. The tournament will be held in Switzerland in 2026 and in Germany in 2027.

Tiina Frazer, vice president, brand, marketing and communications for Nokian Tyres, said the collaboration is a "perfect fit" for the Nokia, Finland-based tire maker.

"Ice hockey is a sport built for extreme conditions. It demands peak performance on ice where grip, speed and precision define success," Frazer said. "Similarly, a tire is engineered to deliver confident control and reliable grip on a road, no matter the weather."

Nokian said the tournament is relevant in all three regions it serves: North America, the Nordic region and Central Europe.

"Hockey has strong visibility there, which drives audiences in all three regions," said Wes Boling, senior communications and

content manager for Nokian's North American subsidiary.

"It's a recurring event, which gives us a chance to get in front of a lot of consumers," he said.

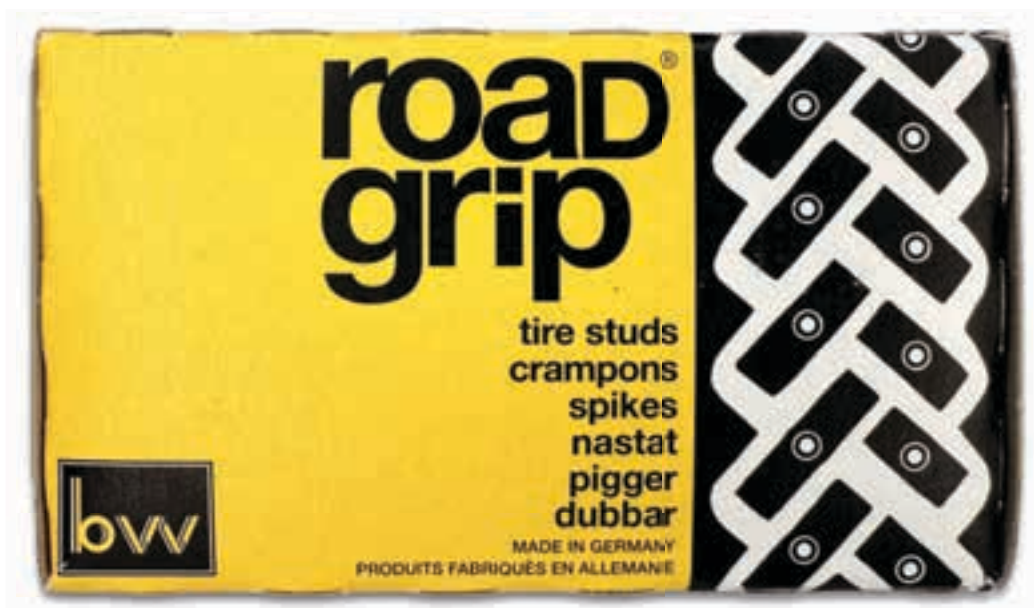
According to Boling, Nokian is putting together a plan to optimize its exposure at the tournament, not only for consumers, but for dealers.

Nokian said the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship is the world's largest annual winter sports event. The 2026 championship will be May 15 to 31, as the world's 16 best national teams will compete for the title in 64 games.

"We're proud to support an event that brings together millions of passionate hockey fans – whether they're cheering at the ice rink or following the excitement from their screens," Frazer said. "It's a privilege to be part of the special moments viewers enjoy around the globe, especially as awareness of our heritage as inventor of the winter tire is growing globally."

According to Nokian, the world's first winter tire, the Kelirengas, was introduced in 1934 by Suomen Gummitehdas Osakeyhtiö, the company that later became Nokian Tyres.





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MICHELIN XAS TURNS 60!

— BY TIM PAWSEY

HARD TO BELIEVE, but it's 60 years since Michelin turned the tire world on its ear (once again!) with the introduction of the XAS. While it may not have been as significant as the arrival of the 'X' or even 'ZX' for that matter, the impact of XAS was still significant.

At the time, working in Michelin's still relatively newly-established Canadian head office in Montreal, I recall a certain sense of disbelief, albeit brief, followed by a kind of knowing acceptance... well, this is Michelin. And things are different.

The 'AS' in XAS stood for 'Assymetric', meaning the tire was a departure from usual, symmetrical designs. It used different zones on the tread to manage distinct forces acting on the tire. As in, the outer tread was optimized for cornering grip and lateral forces while the inner tread was designed for better straight-line stability and water evacuation. Overall, the result was a tire that delivered both comfort and precision at high speeds. In short, the ultimate rally and sports tire.

To fully comprehend what this meant it probably helps to understand that Michelin of the 1960s in Canada was still a bit of a purist's choice. You could say the XAS was even a 'geek's' tire, in a good way of course. In those days, if you were seeking a real hands-on driving experience your choice of wheels was more likely to be a classic Beamer, 911 or Alfa (if you were lucky) rather than a mass-market, US produced 'sports' marque such as Corvette, Impala or Camaro. Perhaps one of the ironies of the XAS North American launch was that its promo materials featured the Ford Falcon, one of the prime fitments recommended.

According to Maryland's Eclectic Tie Company, the XAS' groundbreaking design of the 1960s quickly become a favourite among enthusiasts and racers alike, and has since been updated



in Michelin's modern 'Classic' production line to accommodate the collector market, combining authentic styling that collectors demand with modern safety and performance.

The XAS remains the perfect match for iconic cars, and became standard or recommended equipment on many legendary European builds, including:

- Porsche 911 (1960s and 70s models): Improved handling and stability on winding roads.
- BMW 2002: A cult classic that demanded tires capable of matching its sporty suspension.
- Alfa Romeo Giulia: Benefited from the XAS's combination of agility and comfort.
- Citroën DS and SM: Known for innovative engineering, they paired perfectly with Michelin's advanced design.

Owning one of these cars today without period-correct tires means missing part of the driving experience. The Michelin XAS restores that authenticity. Says Eclectic, "For restorers, fitting a classic car with Michelin XAS tires is often the finishing touch that separates a good restoration from a great one."

Even though the Michelin XAS looks period-correct, its materials and construction meet today's standards. Drivers can expect:

- Reliable wet-weather grip
- Predictable handling at highway speeds
- A balance of comfort and performance that makes long drives enjoyable

Unlike tires that have sat on a shelf for decades, new Michelin XAS tires give collectors the freedom to drive their cars regularly without sacrificing safety.





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IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE LENDING OUT YOUR COMPANY CAR



FEDERATED INSURES OVER 300 WCTD MEMBERS IN WESTERN CANADA. THEY RANGE FROM SMALL RURAL INDEPENDENTS TO NATIONAL BRANDS AND BUYING GROUPS.

MANY PEOPLE MAY not think twice about lending their car to someone, especially if they're a friend or colleague. But in both instances, major problems could arise if something goes wrong. So, it's important to think twice before lending out a company vehicle and to know as much as you can about what risks you're opening yourself up to.

Before lending out a company car to an employee, it's important to establish clear expectations regarding its purpose and usage. This includes outlining any rules or restrictions tied to the vehicle. For example, if the car is provided solely for attending business meetings, it should be designated for business use only. Alternatively, if the vehicle is intended to enhance employee comfort, personal use may also be permitted.

You should also define the process for returning the car when it's no longer needed or when employment ends. Having a clear agreement in place helps avoid confusion or disputes about the vehicle's return.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN IF I LEND OUT MY COMPANY CAR?

Once you lend your car or truck out, you can't control what happens to it, but you could be negatively impacted by someone else's actions. For instance, if the person borrowing the vehicle is in an at-fault accident, your insurance premium may increase. Another thing to keep in mind is that third-party coverage may also be affected if the driver does something that violates your insurance policy and gets involved in an accident. You could be implicated in the third-party insurer's recovery attempt, as they could sue both the driver and vehicle owner. Your insurance coverage may not respond to the loss because of the violation, so you and the driver would have to pay for your own legal counsel.

LET'S START WITH SOME QUESTIONS

Because of the potential negative ramifications associated with lending out your company vehicle, it's important to ask some questions before doing so. And yes, this applies even when lending a car to your own employees.

SOME POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO ASK INCLUDE:

- Do you have a proper driver's license for the type of vehicle you're using? You may wish to obtain a copy for your records, but also keep in mind applicable privacy law requirements when it comes to collecting personal information.
- What will the car be used for?

- How long will you need it for?
- Where will you be travelling (out of province, out of the country)?
- Who will be driving?
- How many passengers will you have?
- Will alcohol be consumed socially?

SOME OTHER THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

You can never be too careful in a situation like this. There are a number of best practices you should follow to make sure you're doing everything you can to avoid an unwanted situation.

SOME IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW INCLUDE:

- There should only be as many people in the vehicle as there are seat belts.
- See if there are any restrictions on the license of the person you're lending the vehicle to. Younger drivers especially may still be in some stage of their Graduated Driver License, which places restrictions on their driving status.
- Giving someone keys to your company vehicle gives them consent to drive it - even if there was no written or verbal agreement.
- Vehicles with company logos can be great advertising but may also be detrimental to your business' image if the vehicle is used irresponsibly or gets in an accident.



PROTECT YOURSELF WITH INSURANCE

You can't control what someone does when they're using your company vehicle, but you can be careful about who you lend it to and determine the measures you have in place in case of an accident. To learn more, visit our [commercial auto insurance](#) page and find out how we can help you today!

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PIRELLI CYBER TYRE AWARDED MOST INNOVATIVE TYRE TECHNOLOGY

— BY TRAC CANADA

PIRELLI CYBER TYRE has won the title of Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) Innovation of the Year at the AutoTech Breakthrough Awards 2025, an international prize awarded by the Tech Breakthrough intelligence platform, which identifies the most innovative players and services in the automotive technology sector.

Cyber Tyre is the world's first intelligent system capable of collecting data directly from the tyre, processing them through Pirelli proprietary software and algorithms, and communicating them in real time to the vehicle's electronics, enabling improved driving dynamics, safety, and integration with digital infrastructures.

"Cyber Tyre is a key technology for the future of smart mobility, which includes autonomous driving, connected vehicles, and the digitalisation of infrastructures. By integrating intelligence directly into the tyre, Pirelli Cyber Tyre makes transport systems safer, as well as sustainable and data-driven", writes AutoTech Breakthrough, explaining the reasons for the award.

"This recognition highlights the value of Cyber Tyre, which gives the tyre a new role in the revolution currently taking place in mobility. In Software-Defined Vehicles (SDV), the availability of precise real-time data is essential: our technology enables, for the first time, the transmission of detailed information to the vehicle's electronics regarding the tyre's status and road surface conditions, improving safety, performance, and efficiency. The system has already been adopted on high-end vehicles, with the goal of extending its application to an increasingly wider audience and to different functionalities towards other systems thanks to V2X connectivity", said Piero Misani, CTO of Pirelli.

PIRELLI CYBER™ TYRE: HOW IT WORKS AND MAIN APPLICATIONS

Thanks to sensors positioned inside the tread, Cyber™ Tyre measures parameters such as pressure, temperature, tread wear, and load. These data, processed by Pirelli algorithms, are transmitted to a control unit that optimises the vehicle's electronic systems, such as ESP, ABS, and traction control, significantly improving safety and driving experience. Thanks to collaboration with Bosch Engineering, the system is fully integrated into the vehicle's electronic architecture.

In addition to in-car functionalities, Cyber™ Tyre enables V2V (Vehicle-to-Vehicle) and V2I (Vehicle-to-Infrastructure) communication, contributing to the development of smart roads and smart cities, where the collected data help in urban

"Cyber Tyre is a key technology for the future of smart mobility, which includes autonomous driving, connected vehicles, and the digitalisation of infrastructures."

mobility planning and maintenance. The various V2X (Vehicle-to-Everything) connectivity capabilities can enable warning functions for vehicles and drivers about real-time road conditions, interact with traffic lights and road signs, optimise public transport and fleet management, offering essential support for the development of autonomous driving.

Cyber Tyre technology is already on the market and has been adopted on several high-end models and is under development for various premium and prestige vehicle platforms. Recently, Aston Martin and Pirelli announced an agreement for the integration of the system into the British luxury brand's future models.

FEDERATED INSURANCE AI VIDEO: WELL WORTH YOUR TIME

DID YOU KNOW that while AI is simplifying tasks like writing emails and setting reminders, it is also being exploited by cyber attackers? These attackers can create convincing voices and messages that prompt engagement, such as clicking on malicious links, and making phishing attempts harder to detect.

This is why our partner in insurance, Federated Insurance, has created a short one-minute educational video that explains how AI is being exploited in cyber-attacks, the signs to watch for, and best practices for training and security measures to protect your business and employees.

Take a minute to watch the video and learn how to safeguard your business from AI-driven cyber threats:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dEsGceRg_o

Stay vigilant and protect your business.

HOW THE WINTER TIRE HAS EVOLVED

– NOKIAN TYRES

LAUNCHED ABOUT 90 years ago, Nokian's "Kelirengas" was regarded as a ground-breaking product. The Finnish made tire boasted a rough tread that could climb up the snowiest of roads. But how does that unique product of its time match up against a modern, non-studded winter tire? Nokian compared the Kelirengas with the Nokian Hakkapeliitta R2, the winner of multiple tests.

The world's first winter tire, introduced by Suomen Gummitehdas in 1934, brought about a revolution on the Nordic winter roads. Before this time, the tires used on the narrow and snowy roads had mostly been reminiscent of summer tires. When arriving at the foot of a snow-covered hill the driver had to exit the vehicle to install cumbersome snow chains. The new winter tire was called the Kelirengas ("Weather Tire") because it had a rough tread pattern that introduced a new type of grip for winter roads.

Kelirengas was developed for trucks in order to allow them to move in thick snow. The transverse tread pattern of the tire dug into the snow like a track, which made climbing snowy uphill a lot easier, says Matti Morri, Technical Customer Service Manager for Nokian Tyres.

Nowadays, however, traction in snow alone is not enough for a tire. As the ploughing of the roads started, they became icy, and even more was required from the winter tire. When comparing the Kelirengas to its modern second cousin, the Nokian Hakkapeliitta R2, we can see that the changes in the tread compound and pattern alone are enormous.

In addition to traction, modern tires must also have good lateral grip. The symmetrical, arrow-shaped pattern of the Nokian Hakkapeliitta R2 cleans itself well in deep snow, and has good grip on ice and slush, says Matti Morri, Nokian Technical Customer Service Manager.

DOZENS OF NEW RAW MATERIALS

Although the Kelirengas was unique for its time, it is only a winter tire by modern standards in terms of its tread pattern. The Kelirengas used a similar, very rigid rubber compound as the summer tires, which means that the grip solely depended on the grooves. Nowadays, rubber compounds that have been specially tailored for the tread provide a substantial part of the grip. And whereas over one hundred raw materials are used in the manufacturing of a modern, non-studded winter tire, the Kelirengas only used one third of them.



Nokian Test Track

Very small, crystal-like particles have been added into the rubber compound of the Hakkapeliitta R2. They act like built-in studs on icy roads, Morri explains.

Nowadays, non-studded winter tires use both natural and synthetic rubber. Natural rubber works stably along a wide temperature range, allowing the tread compound to remain flexible and maintain good grip. The proportion of carbon black in the tire has been replaced by silica, which significantly improves the fuel efficiency and wet grip of the tire.

100 MM. WIDER

Modern drivers value things in their winter tires that the users of the Kelirengas could not even dream of, such as the steering feel of the tire. This is also evident in the size of the tire. The Kelirengas, designed for trucks, had a width of only 190 millimetres, whereas the modern non-studded Nokian Hakkapeliitta R2 is available for passenger cars with a width of up to 290 millimetres.

Width improves driving comfort substantially. The fact that the bias-ply structure of the Kelirengas has been replaced by a radial structure has also yielded a quantum leap forward in the handling of the tire.

The only thing that has not changed from the days of the Kelirengas is the weather. Winter tires are still used in the demanding and varying conditions of the north, Morri says.

Based in Finland, Nokian is the only tire manufacturer in the world that focuses on the needs of the northern conditions that we experience daily. Nokian Tyres are marketed in Canada exclusively by Kal Tire.

GROUP MICHELIN RESPONDS TO 4.4% MARKET SHIFT

GROUP MICHELIN'S SALES through the first nine months were \$21.8 billion, down 4.4% year-over-year, primarily due to difficulties in North America.

The world's top tire maker released third-quarter financial results Oct. 22, a week after downgrading its projected full-year results.

CEO Florent Menegaux addressed the revision at the start of the company's conference call with investors.

"It came late in the year, and with unexpected magnitude, I fully recognize it," Menegaux said. "I owe you clarity to help you understand what led us to warn this way."

Michelin's financial results were in line with expectations until September, when the company's North American business, accounting for 40% of sales, took a hit, which Menegaux attributed to two decisions.

First, in July, Michelin ended its relationship with American Tire Distributors (ATD), the largest wholesaler in the United States, leading to decreased volumes during the third quarter.

Menegaux said the decision to drop ATD wasn't long planned, rather it was made after ATD filed for bankruptcy last October without notifying Michelin in advance.

Michelin's distribution has been rerouted through National Tire Wholesale (NTW) and U.S. Venture Inc., and the transition should be finished by year's end, he said. NTW is a subsidiary of TBC Corp., which is owned by Michelin and Sumitomo Corporation. U.S. Venture is the parent company of U.S. AutoForce.

The second reason for the North American slump was Michelin's price increase to offset costs of raw materials, European Union regulations and U.S. tariffs, causing it to lose replacement market share, Menegaux said.

Michelin's global sales during the third quarter were \$7.1 billion at current foreign exchange rates, down from \$7.6 billion a year ago.

Menegaux assured investors the company is in a good financial spot.

"As a conclusion, Michelin is emerging stronger from the current turmoil," he said. "We are looking ahead to 2026 with confidence."

AUTO AND TWO-WHEEL TIRES

Michelin's global automotive and two-wheel tire sales for the first nine months were \$11.9 billion, down 2.5% from last year, as volumes dropped 2.9%.

Global volumes of original equipment (OE) passenger and light



truck (PLT) tires were up 2% overall, driven by a 9% increase in China, but sales were down in Europe by 6% and in North and Central America by 3%.

PLT replacement volumes were up 1% globally, with increases of 4% in Europe and 1% in China, while North and Central America were down 1%.

The company said it will continue to prioritize the Michelin brand and the premium 18-inch and larger segment, which accounts for 68% of sales.

In the two-wheel sector, sales grew slightly despite a slowdown in North America the company attributed to tariffs.

TRUCK/BUS TIRES

Nine-month sales in the road transportation segment were down 8.1% to \$5.1 billion. Notably, the North and Central American market saw OE volumes drop 20%, due to manufacturers stockpiling trucks, economic uncertainty and potential regulation changes. OE volumes in South America were down 8% due to Brazil's economy facing high interest rates, currency depreciation and high U.S. tariffs.

Global truck/bus replacement volumes were up 4%, including increases of 2% in Europe, 3% in South America and 6% in North and Central America.

SPECIALTY TIRES

Nine-month specialty segment sales were down 5% to \$4.9 billion, as volumes decreased 4.5%.

Original equipment sales, consisting primarily of beyond-road sales, saw weak demand for farm tires globally and shrinking demand in the construction segment.

But Michelin gained market share in the mining sector and maintained a strong position in key markets for aircraft tires.

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INCOMING TIA PRESIDENT RUSS DEVENS TO PRIORITIZE TRAINING

RUSS DEVENS, INCOMING TIRE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (TIA) PRESIDENT HAS SPENT HIS ENTIRE CAREER FOCUSED ON SAFETY AND PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM HARM

– BY MIKE MANGES, MODERN TIRE DEALER

"WE ALWAYS WANT TO CONTINUE TO GROW OUR MEMBERSHIP," says Russ Devens, incoming Tire Industry Association president.

Russ Devens, incoming president of the Tire Industry Association (TIA), has spent his entire career focused on safety and protecting people from harm.

Devens hired into Wilkes-Barre, Pa.-based McCarthy Tire Service Co. Inc. around 11 years ago as a safety manager - his entry into the tire industry. Prior to joining McCarthy Tire Service, he worked in the insurance industry for about a dozen years. Before that, he was a police officer. ("The tire industry is basically my third career," he says.)

As McCarthy Tire Service's director of safety and risk management, Devens is laser-focused on making sure that his employer's technicians make it home safely each night. As TIA president, he will prioritize technician training and safety for all of the association's members.

MTD: As director of safety and risk management for McCarthy Tire Service, how will your position and experience inform the direction you want TIA to take during your term?

Devens: We're one of the largest commercial tire dealers in the country, but we don't only do commercial. We do just about everything there is in the tire industry. We do retail. We do industrial tires. We do farm and ag. We do wheel reconditioning. Having that experience will assist me with TIA because I can relate to pretty much every aspect of the tire industry.

MTD: Technician training and safety are huge priorities for TIA. During TIA's OTR Conference this past February, TIA mentioned updates it has made - and is continuing to make - to various tire technician training programs. Can you recap some of those updates and what the association is planning to do in 2026?

Devens: I've been on the board for eight years at TIA. I've been chair of the training and education committee for six years. When I came on as the chair of the training and education committee, I worked closely with TIA's staff to ensure that we had a five-year plan, continually updated every year. We've updated Basic ATS, which is Automotive Tire Service. We've updated Basic CTS (Commercial Tire Service.) We've just about finalized basic Earthmover Tire Service training. And we're going to continue to focus on updating the rest of the programs. When I first came on, most of our training was in analog format and couldn't be easily changed. Everything is digital format now, so we don't have to (film) an entire program all over again going forward. Because everything is now digital, we can add, take out ... as technology

changes, we can make changes on the fly.

MTD: What are some of the most pressing issues facing the association and in particular, its tire dealer members?

Devens: I would say acquisitions, consolidation. Our numbers continue to grow. We're still getting new members who have been dealers who never joined (before) or maybe joined, dropped out and came back again.

MTD: Is increasing tire dealer membership in TIA a priority?

Devens: Yes. We always want to continue to grow our membership. When I first came on, our membership was 8,000. Now it's up to 13,000. (Editor's note: that 13,000 figure represents total members, including tire dealers, according to Devens.)

MTD: TIA continues to fight on behalf of tire dealers. Are there certain legislative issues that TIA will focus on in 2026?

Devens: Right to Repair is always a big thing and has been for several years now. That's going to continue to be one of our main focuses on the government side. There's some new legislation that was introduced as far as protecting roadside service (technicians.) That's something that's close to my heart. We had a fatality back in 2019. One of my technicians was struck and killed by a drunk driver on the side of the road. We're going to continue to work to increase penalties for not following move-over laws and things like that.

MTD: Why is it beneficial for tire dealers to get involved with TIA?

Devens: To stay on top of what's going on, as far as changes in training. The networking aspect is very important, as well. The networking aspect of belonging to TIA is probably one of the biggest things.

MTD: What are some headwinds and opportunities you see within the tire industry coming up next year and how will TIA approach these issues?

Devens: The biggest one is still the economy and tariffs and how that's impacting our members and how that's impacting manufacturers, as far as pricing. I think from the training perspective, we're in a good place. I want to make sure the people who are going to follow me on (TIA's) board continue to focus on the mission of TIA.





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CONTINENTAL USES VACUUM TECH TO STUDY TIRE WEAR

– BY TIRE BUSINESS

CONTINENTAL A.G. HAS partnered with the Technical University of Braunschweig (Germany) to develop an method for analyzing tire wear that uses a specially adapted vacuum device mounted behind a drive wheel.

In its quest to reduce tire wear, Continental A.G. has partnered with the Technical University of Braunschweig (Germany) to develop an method for analyzing tire wear that uses a specially adapted vacuum device mounted behind a drive wheel.

The vacuum, together with advanced particle sensors, enables the detection of fine airborne particles behind the wheels and at other points on the vehicle.

This measurement technique was developed as part of research project OLRAP, "Online Analysis of Airborne Tire Wear Particles at the Point of Origin and Differentiation from Other Sources." Conti said the insights gained feed directly into the tire maker's development, enabling targeted improvements.

"Data on the quantity, size and structure of particles allows us to optimize tire designs and rubber compounds even more precisely – without compromising on safety or performance," Dr. Matthias Haufe, head of Material Development and Industrialization at Continental, said. "This not only advances our technology but also prepares our products for upcoming regulations like the Euro 7 standard, which will introduce limits on tire wear emissions in the EU starting in 2028."

THE OLRAP RESEARCH PROJECT STUDIED THE PROPERTIES OF TIRE WEAR.

A test vehicle fitted with the specialized vacuum used in the study was able to determine the origin of particles – whether they came from the tires, road surface or brakes.

Particle measurement instruments developed by TU Braunschweig were mounted at various points on the vehicle, including directly behind the wheels, to collect detailed, time-specific data.

These measurements were correlated with factors such as driving dynamics, road surface conditions and weather, which Conti said is an essential step toward scientifically accurate tire wear analysis.

Using a newly developed multi-sampler device, researchers collected samples related to specific driving events. In the lab, they compared particles gathered during cornering versus straight-line driving.

"The highly complex experimental setup, with simultaneous measurements at different points on our test vehicle, generated vast amounts of data, helping us to better understand tire wear," Dr. Benjamin Oelze, head of Tire Wear Testing Development at Continental, said. "We identified clear correlations between



particle concentration and speed profiles, as well as the impact of high longitudinal and lateral acceleration on tire wear."

Conti said the findings could help optimize traffic flow and vehicle driving profiles to reduce emissions and improve environmental sustainability.

TIRES RANK AS SECOND MOST COMMON VIOLATION

THE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SAFETY ALLIANCE (CVSA) recently released the results of its 72-hour International Roadcheck inspection and data-gathering campaign.

Inspectors found 2,899 tire-related out-of-service vehicle violations. Tire violations accounted for 21.4% of all vehicle out-of-service violations and consisted of flat tires, poor tread depth, major cuts exposing cord ply and other damages that violated safety standards on the road.

The U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) roadside inspection violation data for 2025 found that "tires – all others, leaking or inflation less than 50% of the maximum inflation pressure" was the fourth most-issued infraction, "accounting for 65,184 vehicle violations nationwide."

Most vehicles (81.6%) and drivers (94.1%) inspected didn't have any out-of-service violations. However, inspectors issued "13,553 (overall) vehicle, 3,317 driver and 177 hazardous materials/dangerous goods (HM/DG) out-of-service violations, and placed 10,148 commercial motor vehicles and 3,342 drivers out of service."

"The vehicle out-of-service rate was 18.1% and the driver out-of-service rate was 5.9%," CVSA's report found. This means those drivers and vehicles were restricted from traveling further until all out-of-service violations were corrected.

As part of the North American Standard Inspection process, International Roadcheck's focus this year for its vehicle violation category was tires and the driver focus was "false records of duty status (RODS)."

The report also found that 10% (332) of all driver out-of-service infractions were for false logs, or RODS, a serious violation that hides the hours a driver has been driving or on duty.

ATTURO EXPANDS TRAIL BLADE MTS, ATS AND AZ850 LINES

—TIRE BUSINESS

ATTURO TIRE CORP. has added 25 new sizes to its portfolio. The expansion includes two new sizes of the Trail Blade MTS, eight of the Trail Blade ATS and 15 additional sizes of the UHP AZ850.

The **Trail Blade MTS** is a mud-terrain tire that features a unique four-lug center tread pattern modeled after a karambit knife, which Atturo said gives it even more biting edges than a typical M/T. Short-course off-road racing elements are built into its DNA, the company added, from the sidewall construction to the rubber compound optimized for both grip and longevity.

Atturo's most aggressive all-terrain tire, the **Trail Blade ATS** delivers rugged off-road grip and style without compromising on-road comfort, the company said. Deep tread and extensive siping give it control in any terrain or weather. The ATS carries the 3PMS (Three Peak Mountain Snowflake) designation for cold weather performance and is backed by a 50,000-mile warranty.

The eight new ATS sizes cover a range of applications from CUVs, Jeeps and light trucks including several 12-ply rated sizes for 2500/3500 series pickups.

Atturo AZ850 is a UHP tire with an advanced asymmetrical tread pattern that maximizes grip and stability.

"Despite its focus on speed and grip, the AZ850 doesn't punish you on daily drives: it's engineered to minimize noise and give a relatively comfortable ride for a low-profile high-performance tire," the company said.

This tire also boasts a reinforced construction to support the heavier weight larger EVs, sedans and SUVs. The latest fifteen sizes include 19-, 20- and 21-inch rim diameters targeting sports cars, sedans and performance SUVs including staggered front and rear pairs.

"This latest release of new sizes continues to demonstrate Atturo's focus on bringing profitable opportunities to dealers by offering a unique mix of sizes and patterns," according to Atturo President Michael Mathis.



TIA HONOURS 2025 HALL OF FAME CLASS OF TIRE GREATS

— BY TIRE BUSINESS — DON DETORE

THE LATEST CLASS of tire industry greats cemented their legacy when they officially were inducted in the Tire Industry Association (TIA) Hall of Fame.

The four latest members of the hall — longtime Tire Business commercial tire columnist and tire and wheel maintenance safety expert Peggy Fisher; Tom Klinge, a pioneer in the off-the-road (OTR) tire industry who has dedicated his career to safety; Tomoshige "Tomo" Mizutani, former CEO and chairman of Nitto Tire U.S.A. Inc.; and Mike Joines, founder and longtime CEO of Tire Rack — were honored Nov. 2 during a cocktail party hosted by TIA at Planet Hollywood Casino.

Klinge lives in Australia and was unable to attend Monday's event.

The three other enshrinees received their awards from TIA President and CEO Richard "Dick" Gust.

TIA CEO Dick Gust (from right) leads a toast to 2025 Hall of Famers, including Tomo Mizutani, Peggy Fisher and Mike Joines, at a TIA Hall of Fame event Nov. 2 in Las Vegas.

In addition, Maryland Delegate Kevin Hornberger was named as a recipient of the Friend of the Industry Award.

The honorees will be feted during the 2025 Global Tire Expo — Powered by TIA, held in conjunction with the SEMA Show, which is being held Nov. 4–7 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

The awards recognize individuals whose leadership, innovation, and advocacy have made a lasting impact on the tire industry. The TIA Hall of Fame is the industry's highest honor, recognizing individuals who have demonstrated significant and lasting contributions to the tire industry in areas such as technological innovation, business leadership, safety, advocacy and education.

"Our 2025 inductees embody the spirit of innovation and service that defines the tire industry," Gust, said. "Their contributions have improved safety, expanded opportunity, and shaped the way we do business worldwide."

Video interviews of the 2025 Tire Industry Hall of Fame Class of inductees are now available on the Tire Industry Association's website. Each video highlights the honorees' contributions, career achievements and reflections on what this recognition means.

The full interviews are available on tireindustry.org

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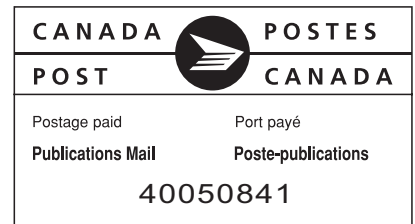
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