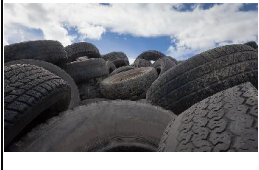


## Fleet Tire Data – What is Important?

ANALYZE YOUR  
SCRAP TIRE PILE  
TO DETERMINE  
IF YOUR TIRE  
PROGRAM  
IS REALLY  
SUCCESSFUL



Every fleet manager understands how important it is to have a serious tire program because commercial truck tires are expensive and make a big impact to a fleet's bottom line. Tires play a major role in vehicle fuel economy and traction. Keeping a close eye on tire cost/mile is very important. Understanding how to maximize tire removal miles, protecting the tire casing for retreading, keeping tires properly inflated, and knowing when to remove/rotate tires are the keys to success.

One of the most important metrics any tire program would be to track tires that are related to roadside service calls. Vehicles stuck on the side of the road because of tire issues is costly and unproductive. You can also be subject to citations from the highway police due to safety concerns. In many cases, the vehicle load in the trailer may have a "just-in-time" delivery schedule; and if that schedule is not met, significant financial penalties will result. Emergency road service calls average over two and half hours and can be very expensive, especially after-hours. Additionally, the cost of the replacement tire or wheel in this circumstance is typically higher than the normal purchase price.

It is critical for a fleet to track why a tire failed on the road. Was it due to a slow leaking nail puncture or did the driver have shoulder/sidewall impact damage? Maybe the tire was a retread that had a nail hole repair failure. It may have been the tire was just worn down to the belts which led to the tire failure. Developing a database with this type of information will help the fleet manager determine what is required to reduce the roadside service calls. Maybe one tire make/model is simply more susceptible to punctures and damage. Fleets report a significant drop in tire-related roadside service calls with the use of automatic tire inflation systems on their trail-

ers. Industry studies over the years clearly show that tire failure due to running under-inflated is the most common cause of tire roadside service calls.

Driver education programs about tires are always an excellent idea for every fleet manager to implement. Part of the pre-trip inspection includes a visual inspection of all tires, looking for early signs of problems. These can include side-wall damage, punctures, uneven wear or under-inflated tires. The use of an accurate pressure gauge is critical, as some that have been knocked around the shop can vary by +/- 5 or more psi! Tires should be checked for any signs of damage/punctures and irregular wear. Air pressure should be measured with an accurate gauge. The TMC of the American Trucking Associations publishes both a Bias and Radial Tire Wear Conditions book. If a driver or technician sees a tire that is not wearing smoothly and evenly, these manuals will help identify exactly what condition probably led to the specific irregular wear issue. Tires which develop irregular wear will be removed early and the tire cost/mile will go up.

Implementing a good retread program will also help reduce overall tire cost/mile. Depending on the specific retread tread depth, compound, and design, retreads cost one third to one half compared to a new tire. Protecting the tire casing from cuts, snags, and stone damage will ensure that the casing will survive the retread process. Increased heat will develop in tires running underinflated because of the excessive flexing of the tire sidewall. Heat will lead to casing degeneration and a significant drop in retreadability. It is always a good idea to work with your local retreader who can supply data about every casing that you send over for retreading. Analysis of this data is very important to the overall success of your tire program.

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## Q&A PSI ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

**Q.** My fleet is comprised of container chassis. With the new GHG-2, Greenhouse Gas Emission rulemaking, am I obliged to be using tire inflation on my chassis?

**A.** Effective 1/1/2018, container chassis fall under the category of non-box trailers. As a result of the new rulemaking, low rolling resistant tires, in combination with either automatic tire inflation systems or tire pressure monitoring systems, will be mandated on new equipment. Existing chassis do not require upgrades to tire inflation systems and fuel efficient tires.