

Today is the First Day of Summer and the Heat is ON.

A very famous tire engineer once stated, "Heat is to tires as Kryptonite is to Superman"...in other words, its worst enemy. Taken all together, hot summer temperatures, under inflated tires, heavy loads, and traveling at high speeds and you have a recipe for tire disaster....that is exactly why you see more alligators on the highway in the summer season. During the winter or spring months, a tire that was being run under inflated would have heat build up that would dissipate into the atmosphere as the ambient temperature is cold. Now, when operating in temperatures in excess of 100 degrees the heat will increase significantly in an under inflated tire.

The effect that proper air pressure has on tires is endless.

When a radial truck tire has been inflated to its proper air pressure according to the weight it is carrying, the operating temperature should be around 150 degrees. Let us assume that 100psi is the fleet standard. The rule of thumb is that for every loss in air pressure of 2psi, the tire temperature will increase 5 degrees.

What can fleets do to minimize tire related issues during the summertime months?

- Tire pressure needs to be checked more frequently in the summer. Weekly is recommended.
- Review with drivers the proper tire inspection procedure during a pre-trip inspection.
- Do not rely on the looks of the tire or striking the tire to determine inflation pressure. The only accurate way to access the pressure in a tire is to use a tire gauge. Keep in mind just 2 psi deficit in pressure increases the heat by 5 degrees.
- Plan your tire program around mounting new, deep tread depth tires prior to the winter season. When summer hits, the tires will be worn down and generate less heat.
- Inspect tires for punctures and damage more frequently in the summer months. Tire punctures tend to increase during the summer because the tread rubber becomes hotter and "softer" and acts as a magnet to nails and road debris

Bottom line: Checking your tires on a regular basis for both air pressure and any signs of irregular wear is essential if a fleet wants to maximize mileage and increase fuel economy.

NEWS

The Ontario (Canada) legislature has passed a bill mandating speed limiter use on most large trucks to cap speeds at 105 kilometers per hour (65 mph) to reduce pollution and improve road safety. The use of speed limiters could be implemented as early as this fall, followed by a six -to 12-month education period.

Driver Safety Tip of the Week

When approaching stopped or slowed traffic in front of you, turn on your 4-way flashers momentarily to get the attention of the motorists behind you. This will help draw attention to your brake lights, your slowing vehicle and the conditions surrounding you that are causing the need for your 4-way flashers.

Beware! We are now in the busiest time of year for Road Construction

Drivers need to be especially cautious of construction zones this summer. States are making a concentrated effort to raise the awareness of the dangers in these zones. Here are some safety tips you can share with your drivers regarding construction zones:

- SLOW DOWN and be alert when approaching a "construction zone." Get into the correct lane well in advance. Where traffic is merging into a single lane, be cautious of other motorists racing to get ahead of slowing traffic.
- PAY ATTENTION to what those orange and black warning signs are telling you to do.
- BE ALERT for the actions of other drivers.
- PAY CLOSE ATTENTION to construction equipment and workers. You never know their next move, so be prepared to stop.
- WATCH SPEED LIMITS and don't tailgate. Double your following distance. Rear-end collisions are the most common kind of construction zone accident.
- WATCH FOR CONSTRUCTION VEHICLES entering and exiting the road in or near the construction area, as they may enter and exit at a slower speed than other traffic.
- TURN YOUR HEADLIGHTS ON as you approach a work-zone, alerting both the construction workers and other traffic around you of your presence.
- GIVE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS A BRAKE