

Reduce road deaths - check your tyres today

There is a direct correlation between the condition of tyres and road deaths.

“There’s no denying that tyres play a crucial role when it comes to how a vehicle operates on the road,” says Jakkie Olivier, CEO of the Retail Motor Industry Organisation (RMI).



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“Road safety is a priority for the RMI. We believe road-worthy vehicles will increase road safety so we want to urge motorists and fleet owners to make sure tyre checks are done.”



Are you driving a deathtrap on wheels?

Sherryn de Vos 30 May 2017



Hedley Judd, director of the Tyre Dealers’ and Fitment Centre Association (TDAFA), an affiliate association of the RMI, says to keep tyres in good condition they should be rotated after every 7,000 to 10,000km.

“8,000km is generally optimal,” he says. He recommends that the tyres are balanced, rotated and aligned. “The tyre

pressure should also be checked every 10 to 14 days. Tyres are porous so they leak air. That's why it's important to check the pressure and adjust it to the manufacturer's specifications. Don't adjust a tyre's pressure when the tyre is hot. Generally, a tyre will heat up after about 10 minutes of driving at an average speed," he advises.

He says ideally the spare tyre should be checked as often as the other tyres but realistically this isn't going to happen so once a month is good.

"Check the tyre tread across the full width of the tyre for the whole circumference of the tyre. Check that there are no signs of cracking or perishing due to aging."

Driver behaviour

The condition and life of a tyre is also affected by driver behaviour. Olivier says that drivers need to be aware of the impact that harsh braking, hard cornering, speeding and so on has on the tyres.



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"Tyres wear much faster if a driver is hard on the vehicle. In fact, just by looking at a worn tyre you can tell how the driver drives. For example, flat spotting can be a result of harsh braking, side wear from hard cornering and so on. Harsh driving not only affects the tyres but also the suspension components," he explains.

When it comes to replacing tyres, Judd says don't even consider a second-hand option.

"Firstly, you have no idea or guarantee of what the tyre was subjected to before you came into contact with it. Secondly, it always works out cheaper in the long run buying a new tyre. Second-hand tyres will need to be replaced much quicker and you can end up paying four-times more in the end. Don't go for a budget tyre. Rather get several quotes and go for a reliable brand through an accredited-TDAFA supplier. If you are in doubt about the cost, quality or service you can contact the TDAFA directly for advice," he says.

Judd strongly urges motorists not to do business with unscrupulous hawkers trading on the roadside. "These hawkers generally sell badly worn passenger tyres which have been illegally re-grooved to give an appearance of sufficient tread depth. Re-grooving cuts into the carcass of a passenger tyre converting it into a death trap. The practice is illegal in South Africa."

Check before a long trip

Olivier says checking your tyres before a long trip is paramount. The beginning of November is a good time to do a tyre check so any replacements or repairs can be done ahead of the festive season holiday drive.

“Don’t wait until a day or two before you leave to check the tyres. If you need to replace a tyre and there isn’t available stock it could delay your holiday plans. Rather find an accredited RMI/TDAFA fitment centre so you can be assured of quality standards of service and ethical trading conditions. Also, the RMI has a long-standing track record of successful dispute resolution so if you are not satisfied with the service received there is recourse. Let’s make a difference on our roads by making sure our vehicles are roadworthy,” he concludes.

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