

A Supplement to Fleet Maintenance Magazine

BRIDGESTONE

Summertime is the toughest time for tires. Heat is the enemy, and high speeds, high temperatures and sun-baked pavement can make tires wear faster – and if they're not properly maintained, even destroy them.

Keep 'em cool!

Tires perform best and last longest when inflated to the correct pressure for the load. Underinflation makes tires run hot, wastes fuel and is the real cause of roadside "alligators."

Keep the air inside!

Correct inflation pressure is vital. So check every tire every week with a good gauge. With a little practice, it'll take you only about 1 minute each to check all 18 tires on your truck.

Check tires when the air inside them is the same temperature as the air outside (after tires have "rested" for at least 3 or 4 hours – and before you've driven more than 1 mile).

These are NOT tire gauges



Use metal valve caps with internal seals to keep the air in (and dirt and water out). Better still, go with flow-through valve caps. These offer the protection of metal caps with the convenience of no caps at all (letting you check and adjust pressures without having to remove them).

Metal Cap Flow-through Cap



Metal valve caps with seals are a must, and flow-through valve caps make checking and adjusting pressures a breeze.

with Seal

with Double Seals

Keep good rubber on your rig!

When choosing tires, bear in mind that someday, you may need service or a replacement on the road. And nobody has more authorized tire dealers and truckstops nationwide than Bridgestone and Firestone. For the one nearest you – any time of the day or night - call toll-free: 1-800-815-9793

Introducing the NEW M726 EL

New from Bridgestone: Make your tire dollar go even farther with M726 EL the mega-deep $\frac{32}{32^{\prime\prime}}$ drive – one of the deepest in the industry.

Bridgestone's deep-drive technology and super-tough tread compound mean slower wear to deliver mega-mileage. And that means mini-cost per mile and mega-uptime for you.

Plus, the wider M726 EL takes a full-size cap, so with its legendary Bridgestone retreadability, you can enjoy even more low-cost miles.

Mega-deep ^{32/32}" tread depth

Takes popular M726 technology to the next level with slow wear that delivers mega-mileage and mini-cost per mile.

Casing-saving stone rejector platforms

Improve retreadability and ensure more low-cost miles by preventing trapped stones from impaling the tread and damaging the casing.

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Summer Tire Safety Tips







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INDICATE 202 ON INQUIRY CARD

TIRE PRODUCTIN

Reduce Your Tire Costs

By Kevin Rohlwing, Senior Vice President of Education and Technical Services, Tire Industry Association

leet managers are constantly bombarded with sales people who are confident they can save you money. They'll show you fancy charts and graphs with pages of testimonials that prove their product can deliver substantial savings. Entrepreneurs and inventors see all of those trucks on the road and think they'll make a fortune if they can just come up with the perfect gadget. So there's an endless supply of new additives, devices and services.

One particular area of fleet maintenance that seems to receive a lot of attention from the aftermarket is tires. Since tire costs represent the second highest maintenance expense (next to fuel) for most fleets, it's a hotbutton for most managers. Of course, in order to save money you have to spend

money, so you must choose wisely when making an investment in aftermarket tire products. Let's examine a few of the latest entries into the "we'll save you money sweepstakes."

NITROGEN

There's so much available information on the importance of tire inflation that one could assume that every fleet has an air pressure maintenance program. Of course, we all know that the "boot-o-meter" is used far too often, so drivers and technicians usually don't recognize the problem until the tire is flat.

The primary issue is the fact that regular air naturally bleeds out of a tire at the rate of one to two psi per month. Nitrogen inflation promises to solve this problem because the molecules are larger and don't pass through the innerliner as quickly. Filling a tire with nitrogen doesn't mean it will never lose air. It just means it loses air at a slower rate.

From a cost standpoint, nitrogen inflation does not come cheap. The machines that extract nitrogen from the atmosphere cost thousands of dollars and the membranes must also be periodically replaced at an additional, and sometimes significant, cost. Make sure you find out how often the membrane must be replaced and the cost before making the investment in a nitrogen inflation station.

Most of the major tire manufacturers have come out in support of nitrogen inflation, for obvious reasons.

flation, for Peasons. Fully realizing the benefits of nitrogen inflation depends on a variety of factors. First, is it a problem? Do you have a lot of trouble with irregular wear, run flat tires and rejected casings? Nitrogen can help solve those problems, but only if the drivers and technicians do not undo the advantages at the local tire shop or fuel station. As soon as regular air is introduced to the tire, the benefits start to decrease. Nitrogen is also more resistant to temperature so fleets with a large number of heat-related tire problems are good candidates.

Most of the major tire manufacturers have come out in support of nitrogen inflation, for obvious reasons. Besides the resistance to heat and slower rate of deflation, nitrogen is almost completely free of any moisture. Add all of these benefits together and tires will last (Continued on page S6)



Tire Productivity Supplement Fleet Maintenance

S5

rire productivity Supplement

(Continued from page S5)

longer, retread better and fail less often. But it comes at a price and if there's no return on the investment, you might be better off buying a box of air gauges and handing them out to drivers and technicians. We're still waiting for technology that gets employees to use them.

ULTRA-LOW-PROFILE WIDE-BASE TIRES

At first glance, you have to do a double-take because they look very different than standard



dual tires. low Ultra profile wide base tires are designed to replace a dual tire assembly and can be retrofitted almost to any existing vehicle with disc wheels. Using a special rim with an offset that results in the approximately the

same load point on the bearings and axle, these tire and wheel assemblies represent a significant weight savings over conventional duals. For bulk haulers and tanker fleets, the additional load will eventually add up and result in more products shipped with fewer trucks.

Besides the weight savings, ultra low profile wide base tires have been known to ride smoother and quieter than their conventional dual tire counterparts. Availability and retreadability are still up in the air simply because every truck tire dealer doesn't stock them and there aren't enough retreads in service to accurately assess casing performance. But there are enough of them currently on the road to make them a viable alternative to dual tires. Like any new technology, the fear of the unknown is often enough to scare most fleets away.

TECHNICIAN TRAINING

Training is definitely a concern for almost every company. With an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Regulation that requires training for all employees who even touch truck tires, the need is definitely there. Most OSHA compliance-type video training programs provide little more than basic liability protection. As an alternative, the Tire Industry Association (TIA) can actually send a professional instructor to the fleet to conduct hands-on training with the technicians in the shop. However, the only way it will save you money is if the technicians follow the procedures after the training is completed. If nothing else, it's OSHA compliance and peace of mind. (For more information on field training, contact TIA at 800-876-8372, ext. 106)

SUMMARY

Without tires, a fleet is completely crippled so they are a necessary part of operations. Cost savings can come from a number of different places, but the easiest place to reduce tire expenses is to maintain inflation pressure. Nitrogen can help, but only if it's part of an ongoing maintenance program. Ultra low profile wide base tires represent the newest technology and offer substantial benefits, but fleets would be wise to test them on a few different vehicles before jumping in with both feet. And finally, technician training can save you money, but it's nothing more than compliance and minimal protection if the practices aren't followed on a regular basis.





But most accidents shouldn't. With vigilance, training, and the right gear, many accidents are avoidable.

Safety Vision can help in the "right gear" department. Our camera and monitor systems enhance visibility and eliminate costly accidents-on the road and at the destination. Unobstructed views enable drivers to see behind their trucks as well as the traffic lane on either side. The enhanced visibility increases driver accuracy and safety when backing, changing lanes, or maneuvering in tight spaces. The benefits? Fewer accidents, less liability, better business results.

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TIRE PRODUCTIVITY Supplement

\$Billions Wasted on Tires

From Counteract Balancing

t is commonly believed that the rear wheel assemblies and tires are manufactured so uniformly today that balancing is not necessary. If that is true, then why do you have to balance the front?

Another common misconception is that it is not necessary to balance rear wheel assemblies because of the heavier load carried by these axles, and wheel assemblies being out of balance a bit will not affect anything. In actual fact, as an example, six ounces out of balance on a wheel assembly of an average size tire on an 18 wheeler will multiply to 160 lbs at 60 miles per hour through centrifugal force alone. That 160 lbs



will be multiplied again as much as 50 times by the suspension rebound frequency resonating with the revolution of the out of balance portion of the wheel assemblies. This resonating rebound vibration can be increased after hitting a bump

and will not cease unless the vehicle slows down or speeds up (this is explained in detail through illustrations on our website). The effects are visible by examining trailer tires for premature cupping wear. This premature wear is caused by the heavy out-of-balance spot on the tire hitting the road with every revolution of the wheel assemblies along with the extra force of the rebound frequency of the suspension. This causes the tread to squirm and wear at that spot and eventually migrate through a washboard effect to most of the tire. The overall effect is premature tire wear, increased rolling resistance resulting in fuel wastage and also vibrates the truck, trailer and cargo unnecessarily, causing mechanical and freight damage.

There is also a historic reason why rear wheels are not being balanced today. Prior to the radial tubeless tire, it was almost impossible to keep tube type bias tires balanced especially on rear wheels. The amount of flat tires with tube type bias tires was almost 10 times what it is today. After having a tire repaired, if it was not reinstalled on the wheel exactly the same way as before it was out of balance, it was also almost impossible to have the complete wheel assembly balanced; only the tire and rim or wheel could be balanced. For these reasons, the practice of balancing rear wheels was discontinued. Today, with the latest technology, Counteract Balancing Beads and tubeless radial tires, this is no

For example, we have a report that our product, Counteract Balancing Beads, installed in all wheel positions on a fleet of 100 eighteen-wheelers running line haul from Missouri to California, have measured an estimated fuel savings of \$850,000 for one year, or 5.5 to nine percent on fuel per truck. One of the world's largest truck fleets has reported an increase in steering tire tread life on cab over tractor of 50-60,000 miles by using our product.

longer the case.

REVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE

Counteract Balancing Beads was introduced eight years ago and now manufactured and sold around the world. Counteract is a proven trouble-free product that will not clump, is very clean to work with, contains no dust, and is reusable, resulting in even tire wear and reduced rolling resistance and fuel savings. The cost of balancing all wheel assemblies is a fraction of the savings. It can be installed easily when replacing tires or buying new equipment simply by dropping a pre-measured package of Counteract Balancing Beads into the tire cavity before mounting the tire on the wheel, or in can be injected through the tire valve stem.

NO OTHER PRODUCT LIKE IT

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INDICATE 204 ON INQUIRY CARD

FIRE PRODUCTIVITY Supplement **Six Steps for Prolonging Tire Life**

Retreaded tires can—

and do—perform as

well as tires that have

never been retreaded.

eeping tires properly inflated is the single most critical factor for getting the most out of tires, says Harvey Brodsky, managing director of the Tire Retread Information Bureau (TRIB). By maintaining the proper inflation pressure for a given tire size and load, tires not only last longer, but are safer.

"It is not the tire, but the air the inside the tire that carries the weight of a vehicle, absorbs shock and keeps the tire in its proper shape so it can perform as designed," Brodsky explains. "Besides affecting rolling resistance and thus fuel economy, inflation pressures also influences handling, traction, braking and load carrying

capability."

Improperly inflated tires don't roll (flex) as smoothly or as easily as they were designed to. This irregular flexing generates heat-a tire's worst enemy-and creates an uneven, irregular tire footprint, which increases wear, reduces

traction and performance, and causes handling and ride problems.

Brodsky offers these six steps for prolonging tire life:

1. Check tire pressure regularly, at least once a week. Always use a properly calibrated tire gauge, and check pressure only when a tire is "cold" (before the vehicle has been driven, or when it has been driven less than one mile). "Trying to determine if tires need air by thumping them is as effective as trying to determine if the vehicle's engine needs oil by thumping on the hood," Brodsky says.

2. Use value caps on all valve stems and kept them tight. Metal value caps are best, as they contain a From the Tire Retread Information Bureau

rubber gasket to provide an air-tight seal.

3. Be certain tires in dual wheel assemblies are matched in these important areas: same tire size and air pressure; similar tread patterns and tread designs; and tolerances of not more than onequarter of an inch in diameter and three-quarters of an inch in circumference. Inflation mismatches can cause tire diameters to differ enough that the "larger" tire will drag the "smaller" tire and cause uneven wear.

4. Maintain total vehicle alignment. The front end, other axles and steering- and suspension-related components all need to be operating in their proper positioning to prevent tire-to-road drag and scrub,

as well as undesirable lateral forces.

5. During the pre-trip walkaround safety inspection, look for wheel problems and tire injuries. Rubbing a bare hand along the tread and sidewalls can reveal such damage as flat spots, bulges, cuts, shoulder wear, sidewall problems and missing chucks of tread, all of which can result in on-the-road tire failure.

6. Tires—whether new or retreaded-should be application-specific, so consult with a truck tire specialist before making tire purchases. Brodsky adds that retreaded tires can-and do-perform as well as tires that have never been retreaded, and they do it at a tremendous savings over the high cost of new tires. Truckers can actually cut their tire costs in half by using retreads, according to Brodsky.

For additional information, contact the Tire Retread Information Bureau, toll free from anywhere in North America: 888-473-8732; e-mail: info@retread.org.

Tire Problems are Not Just About Tires... they'll quickly deflate your bottom line, too

FIRE PRODUCT

s a fleet management professional, you know that tires are one of the largest operating expenses for your fleet (second only to fuel). Tire manufacturers will tell you that underinflation is the leading cause of premature tire failure and poor tread life. These experts agree that regularly checking and maintaining tire pressure is one of the most critical procedures in maintaining your fleet. Unfortunately, it is one of the most difficult to enforce. Even in the best maintenance programs, personnel too often overlook checking some tires (and even entire vehicles!). And, NO maintenance program can prevent tire damage resulting from an undetected loss of air pressure while on the road.

The Tire Sentry is a Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS) employing advanced microchip and RF technology to detect loss of tire pressure, and inform the driver in the cab. The heart of the system is a set of tire sensors ("electronic valve caps"). When a loss of pressure is detected, an in-dash Receiver/Display instrument indicates the specific tire on a graphic outline of the vehicle (or trailer), and an audible alarm sounds to attract the driver's attention. The display illuminates only when a loss of tire pressure is detected, prevent-

ing unnecessary driver distraction. Weighing less than an ounce, each tire sensor is powered by two easily replaced standard watch batteries that typically last one to two years. With a low-battery detector built into each tire sensor, the display unit will advise when batteries need to be replaced.

KEY SYSTEM FEATURES

Low Cost: Tire Sentry systems are economical and easy to install and require almost zero maintenance. Easy To Install: Because the wireless tire sensors simply attach to the

ing wheels and



dismounting

tires is not required. No connection is necessary between a truck and trailer. And, no special tools or knowledge are required.

User-Friendly Graphic Display: Audible and visual warnings on a two-inch round standard gaugestyle instrument alert the driver and pinpoint the tire that is losing pressure. Simple fully automatic operation, with no confusing buttons to push, means no operator training.



valve stems, remov-

Low Maintenance: Wireless operation means no wires or hoses to replace, and there are no moving parts to wear out.

A Real-Time Pressure Maintenance System: The Tire Sentry continuously monitors for low tire pressure, even when the vehicle is parked. This makes the Tire Sentry an excellent choice for yard monitoring.

Vehicle Specific or Fleet Specific: Tire Sentry systems may be programmed for Vehicle Specific operation, enabling only that vehicle to receive the signals from its tire sensors, or Fleet Specific, to provide interchangeability between multiple tractors and trailers. Tire Sentry is made in the USA, and features a one-year limited warranty.

BENEFITS

• Improves useful tire life, maximizing return on tire investment

 Promotes safer vehicle operation by reducing the likelihood of blowouts on the road caused by undetected pressure loss.

• Reduces road service calls and costly vehicle downtime

• Improves fuel economy-the D.O.T. advises that the U.S. could save some 4.2 million gallons of fuel every day just by keeping tires properly inflated. •

Tire Sentry®

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TIRE PRODUCTIVITY Supplement Why Automatic Tire Pressure Systems

are NOT Just for Trailers

utomatic Tire Pressure Systems (ATPS) are employed throughout the world on every axle of trucks and buses, not just trailers with hollow axles.

I recently traveled to Argentina where Col-Ven, the company that has been making the VIGIA ATPS since 1974, is located. Here, 90 percent of commercial trucks and 70 percent of buses are outfitted with ATP systems. And they have been using these systems for nearly 30 years. The

most amazing thing I noticed while traveling was what I did not see on their highways.

Argentina is a beautiful country where only the primary highways are up to the standards that we drive on here in the U.S. I drove hundreds of miles and saw thousands of commercial trucks and buses, most of which employed Col-Ven's VIGIA system on

all axles. What was absent from their highways was the most conspicuous thing of all.

NO "ROAD GATORS!"

I witnessed no tire debris on their roads. Just drive 10 miles on any interstate in the U.S. and count the number of tire blowout treads on the side of the road.

That was not all I noticed. I walked around nearly 50 vehicles outfitted with VIGIA and I saw no uneven tread wear on a single tire. Some tires were certainly more worn and much older than others, but even these showed perfect tread wear despite their age.

How is it that a country with less than U.S.-standard roads can keep their highways clear of tire debris and possess trucks and buses with evenly worn tire tread? The answer lies in the VIGIA product.

VIGIA taps in to the vehicle's existing air supply. Hoses run from the air tank to a control panel and then back out, along the axles and finally to the valve stems.

By Brian Moylan, Safer Corporation

The control panel contains a sensor calibrated for each axle. The panel indicates the pressure for the tires on each axle.

Once a minimum three psi leak develops, the unit alerts the driver using gauges and LEDs. Air is automatically pumped from the supply tank through the control panel and down to the valve stem of the affected tire. The calibrated pressure is maintained throughout the journey—in every tire!

> In addition, each VIGIA employs a Auto-Off mechanism in the event of a catastrophic loss of air. This safety valve disables the system, preventing the unit from stealing the air needed for braking.

After speaking with many vehicle owners, I was able to determine several reasons why the VIGIA ATPS is so popular throughout Latin America

and Euorpean countries:

SAFETY-Driver safety is key and safety for other vehicles on the road is paramount in these countries; ON TIME ARRIVAL-Trucks & buses spend less time

on the side of the road, keeping freight and passengers on schedule;

ECONOMY—Vehicle owners using the VIGIA system report an increase in tire life by an average of 60 percent and an average fuel savings of two percent. Finally, they say they never experience a road service call due to a blown or flat tire-NEVER!

VERSATILITY—Fleets of all types use the VIGIA system. Over-the-road, waste haulers, dumps, petroleum tankers, auto carriers, passenger buses and recreational vehicles are all suitable to use VIGIA.

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☐ INDICATE **207** ON INQUIRY CARD

TIRE PRODUCTIVITY Supplement

Nitrogen Tire Inflation

By David Connaughton, Parker Hannifin Corporation

inally, some good news for the tire industry: Nitrogen Tire Inflation. Nitrogen use in commercial truck fleets has been thought of as extravagant and unnecessary until recent technological advances have made nitrogen inflation practical for all.

Thanks to low cost nitrogen generating equipment, nitrogen can be generated inside the vehicle service bay. Nitrogen generators utilize state-of-the-art membrane separation modules to extract nitrogen from the service shop's house compressed air system. Parker Hannifin Corporation has over 6,000 systems world wide.

Most tires in the world are inflated with readily available compressed air. This air has been compressed to 150 psi using an oil lubricated compressor. The compressed air is wet and oily, an inevitable outcome of compression. This moisture and oil is not compatible with the modern pneumatic tire. Moisture in the air can corrode steel and alloy wheels leading to valve stem leaks and rim leaks. This moisture also permeates the rubber tire and can cause corrosion to steel belts, weakening the tires.

It is this high pressure and high temperature (caused when the tire is rolling) oxygen that is most damaging to the rubber compounds in the tire. This is called "chemical" aging and has been cited by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) as one of the factors leading to the problems of blowouts of Firestone tires.

Tire aging is hard to detect. Many vehicles have spare tires that may look fine on the outside. Inside, the effects of chemical aging make them quite dangerous. In a recent study Ford Motor Company has concluded that nitrogen is an antidote to tire

The compressed air is wet and oily, an inevitable outcome of compression. This moisture and oil is not compatible with the modern pneumatic tire.

aging. This study confirms earlier research by scientists at Uniroyal in which nitrogen inflated tires lasted three times longer in laboratory testing.

It is well accepted that proper tire maintenance is proper inflation maintenance. By maintaining proper tire inflation longer than air, nitrogen improves fuel economy, improves tire wear and reduces tire running temperature which leads to longer tire life.

One problem on the roads is the large amount of "gators" or rubber scraps scattered on the road and is blamed on retreads. According to a study conducted by the Technology and Maintenance Council (TMC) of the American Trucking Association (ATA), under-inflation is a primary cause of gators. Most people would be surprised to learn that about half of those gators are from tires that have never been retreaded, with the primary cause of failure being chronic under-inflation.

Under-inflation causes tires to flex more, run hotter and age faster, leading to blowouts. Nitrogen eliminates both under-inflation and premature aging and greatly reduces the incidence of blowouts. These blowouts cost American truck fleets millions of dollars per year in late deliveries, service calls, down equipment and idle workers.

Nitrogen, unquestionably, is the best media for tire inflation. Industry experts like Michelin, Goodyear, Ford, NHTSA and Bridgestone/ Firestone agree. The benefits in years to come will be safer roads, fewer blowouts, better fuel economy, better quality retreads for the trucking industry, and longer lasting tires. •

Safety, Performance and Profit

3 Reasons to Inflate Your Tires with Nitrogen



Generate Nitrogen On Demand

- Achieve consistent tire
- pressure
- **Prevent underinflation**
- **Tires run cooler**
- **Reduce blowouts**
- **Extend tire life**
- Reduce tire maintenance costs







Nitrogen is a dry, inert gas used to inflate airplane tires, off-road truck tires, military vehicle tires and race car tires. When tires are inflated with compressed air, oxygen in the air permeates through the wall of the tire reducing the tire's inflation pressure.

Dry nitrogen will not permeate through the tire. Inflating your fleet tires with nitrogen will improve safety and performance while reducing operating costs.

To learn more about our cost saving TireSaver systems, call 800-343-4048





Pressured

to increase profits?

60



A trailer tire goes flat, a rig goes down, profits deflate. But not if you're equipped with the Meritor[®] Tire Inflation System (MTIS) by P.S.I.

181

21

It constantly maintains proper air pressure so tires wear more evenly, last longer and run smoother. It's possible to reduce operating costs and increase profits by as much as \$1,000

per year! The more money you save with MTIS, the more pressure you can put on the competition. Along with a

RideStar[™] suspension, MTIS

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Maintenance	\$250*
Fuel	\$300*
Blowouts	\$350*

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*Average annual costs per trailer. Sources: Goodyear Engineering Data Book; Commercial Carrier Journal Survey, Sept. 1994; Michelin North America; McGriff Tire Company.