

"How can we help?"

Northern Ireland needs to improve the infrastructure for tyre recovery if we are to prevent disposal of tyres to landfill and uncontrolled burning of tyres. The Environment and Heritage Service are bringing together the whole industry - retailers, used tyre collecting businesses and reprocessors - to discuss these issues and to promote sustainable disposal of used tyres.

As consumers we can help by leaving our tyres with garages for responsible disposal. This will mean there is a reliable source of used tyres to allow retreading and recycling businesses to flourish. The garage may put a small levy on the price of a replacement tyre to go towards its disposal.

We can also help by choosing to buy retreaded tyres. In the past retreaded tyres were not as good as they are today. However, they are now tested to the same standards as new tyres and are therefore just as reliable. They are already used widely on lorries and aircraft.



The Environment and Heritage Service

The aim of the EHS is to protect and conserve the natural and built environment and to promote its appreciation for the benefit of present and future generations.

Environmental Protection seeks to safeguard the quality of air, water and land. This involves the enforcement of legislation and a range of supporting activities to monitor and report on discharges and emissions, to establish the impacts of pollution, to set standards, and issue consents, licenses and authorisations.



“USED TYRES - WHAT’S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT?”



For further information please contact:

The Environment & Heritage Service
Commonwealth House
35 Castle Street
Belfast BT1 1GU

Tel: (028) 9054 6450
Fax: (028) 9054 6480
E-mail: ehsinfo@doeni.gov.uk
www.ehsni.gov.uk



"Used Tyres? What's all the fuss about?"

New legislation being introduced (EC Landfill Directive) will stop whole tyres being landfilled from June 2003, and shredded tyres from 2006. At the same time, increasing vehicle ownership means the number of used tyres is rising and expected to continue to do so

IN NORTHERN IRELAND 16,100 TONNES OF USED TYRES ARE DISPOSED OF EVERY YEAR!

THAT'S ENOUGH TO STRETCH IN A LINE FROM BELFAST TO LONDON AND BACK AGAIN!

"So, what's the problem?"

Rubber is a valuable material and there are many innovative ways to potentially reuse and recycle tyres. A study by Environment and Heritage Service NI has found that at least 20% of used tyres in Northern Ireland are not being disposed of properly:

✱ Tyres burnt on fires

Tyres are highly flammable. Uncontrolled burning of tyres produces dense smoke and toxic fumes polluting air, water, soil and vegetation. Many of the toxic fumes released have the capacity to cause a genetic mutation that can lead to cancer or genetic diseases in future generations. It is thought that uncontrolled burning of tyres is 8 times more likely to cause genetic mutation than the burning of plastic. Water used to control the fire causes these pollutants to be washed into the ground. In NI, the Fire Authority extinguishes around 2500 bonfires every year. Most of these involve the illegal burning of tyres.

✱ Tyres dumped in the countryside

Used tyres get illegally dumped in the countryside including fields and quarries. Because of the synthetic and chemical materials in tyres, it is virtually impossible for them to be broken down naturally to their original raw material state. Not only are tyres an eye sore, ruining our enjoyment of the countryside, but they are also a major source of pollution.

"Are there any solutions?"

Yes, there are many options open for tackling the problem of used tyres responsibly. For example:

✱ Retreading tyres

The process of rebuilding the treads of a tyre makes it possible to re-use used tyres. The casings are buffed and treated with a special chemical and then the casings are remoulded and cropped. Retreading doubles the lifespan of car tyres whereas, truck tyres can be retreaded twice, tripling their lifespan. There are several retreading companies operating in Northern Ireland.

✱ Rubber Crumb

Tyres can be processed into shred or crumb. The crumb is very versatile and can be used for lots of applications including sports track surfaces, safety surfaces and even carpet underlay.

✱ Aggregates

Tyres provide an ideal substitute for natural aggregates for use as lightweight fill in the stabilisation and repair of slopes. Shreds or chips can be used as they are, or blended with other construction materials. Whole and part tyres can be used in wall like structures.

✱ Regulation of Tyre Use:

The alternative uses for tyres described in this leaflet require regulation and control to ensure that they are carried out in a way that does not harm the environment or cause harm to human health. Further information can be obtained from EHS.

✱ Sea defences

Used tyres can be used for floating breakwaters that run parallel to the coast. The tyres are connected together to form a floating wall. Static tyre breakwaters utilise tyre bales and heavy materials such as concrete to make a bale that will submerge and provide a suitable building block.

✱ Used as fuel

Used tyres can be used as fuel in cement making. This reduces the need for fossil fuels, saving resources and money. Within cement kilns, the steel content of the tyres provides an essential source of iron, avoiding the need for shales and clays and reducing the amount of oxides of nitrogen formed in the process. In Great Britain, 5 cement kilns already use tyres as a fuel, consuming over 60,000 tonnes of used tyres each year.

Did you know...

On 1st October 2002 Northern Ireland introduced 'DUTY OF CARE' regulations, which means, businesses that handle used tyres will have a legal responsibility to make sure they are disposed of properly. Not complying with the regulations is a criminal offence and could result in an unlimited fine....

