



TIRE SAFETY STARTS HERE.

# Tire Maintenance & Consumer Awareness

NTSB Symposium

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- TIA is a non-profit organization based in Bowie, MD that represents all segments of the tire industry.
- TIA has over 7,000 members, most of them in the US and Canada.
- The majority of our members are retailers, commercial tire dealers and retreaders.
- TIA's primary missions are technician training and government representation.

- 1) Understand the tire purchase process from the consumer's perspective.
- 2) Evaluate comprehension of various ratings, exploring the clarity, meaningfulness and the likely resulting behaviors.
- 3) Explore potential channels for communication.
- 4) Understand consumers' knowledge of tire maintenance and performance.

Tire ratings are complex and will require a learning curve.

- *“When individuals proactively research their tire purchase independently, they first evaluate prices, and then tend to rely on customer ratings online to make a decision.”*
- *“Respondents want more detailed information about the tires they are purchasing...how long will this tire last, what does a higher safety rating mean, how much money will I save by purchasing more fuel efficient tires?”*

Fuel efficiency is the least important rating.

- *“Consistent across all cities evaluated, safety and durability are primary ratings that have the greatest impact on these individuals.”*
- *“...these individuals believe tire maintenance is what has the greatest impact on fuel economy (pressure and rotation), as opposed to the compounds in the tires themselves.”*
- *“Respondents believe that other factors like the vehicle you drive and the way you driver have more of an impact on fuel economy than the tires you buy.”*

Ultimately, the mechanic or retailer replacing the tire is trusted to recommend a tire that is best.

- *“When evaluating these rating scales, many respondents said they would ask the retailer to explain what the ratings mean in order to be able to use them.”*
- *“Overall, respondents indicate that they would be likely to utilize these ratings during the purchase process, however this result suggests a need to work with retailers to ensure they can interpret and communicate the ratings to their customers to assist with the purchase decision.”*

- TIA has trained and/or certified more than 90,000 technicians since 1997.
- TIA has hundreds of members across the country with trained and certified personnel.
- TIA training programs always include a tire module that is focused on teaching retailers to follow the industry guidelines for replacement tires.
- The lack of consistency between TIA, NHTSA and the tire manufacturers puts retailers in a difficult position when faced with certain situations.

- TIA conducted tests where two new tires were installed on the front axle of a front-wheel-drive vehicle and worn tires remained on the rear.
- There was significant instability when turning or making a sudden lane change on wet pavement.
- As a result, TIA's position is that when only two new tires are installed on a front-wheel-drive vehicle, they must be installed on the rear axle.
- In the same scenario, RMA says the new tires should be installed on the rear and NHTSA says nothing.



- TIA, NHTSA and RMA all agree that consumers should follow the placard when selecting replacement tires.
- When consumers want to “plus size,” TIA is the only organization that provides any specific guidelines or limitations.
- TIA’s position on plus sizing is that the replacement tire must have a load index and speed rating that are equal to or greater than the tire listed on the placard *and* the outside diameter of the replacement tires must be within +/-3% of the diameter of the tires listed on the placard.

- TIA believes that the retailers are the best vehicles for educating consumers.
- TIA is focused on providing retailers with the training and tools that they need to educate consumers.
- TIA believes the best “bang for the buck” is to develop materials and resources that retailers can use at the point of sale to emphasize the role that maintenance plays in tire safety.

- TIA has produced a series of short consumer education videos that focus on individual subjects.
- “Tire Safety Starts with Proper Tire Repair” discusses the guidelines for tire repair and has more than 80,000 views on YouTube.
- “Tire Safety Starts with Winter Tires” discusses the advantages of winter tires when compared to all-season and has more than 6,000 views.
- “Tire Safety Starts with Inspection” shows consumers how to inspect their tires and has almost 2,000 views.

- The focus of each video is on safety so motorists can learn what they can do to maintain the performance of their tires and their vehicle.
- The content of the videos is consistent with industry recommended practices and guidelines.
- The “Tire Repair” video includes footage of the inside of an inflated tire as it rolls through the footprint. The viral capability of this image has definitely contributed to the success on YouTube.

- TIA is the recognized leader in technician education and can easily reach the network of independent retailers with unbiased messages that focus on safety.
- TIA is a trusted source for technical information in the tire industry and conducts more than 70 weeks of training each year.
- TIA has won 5 Telly Awards for excellence in video production, including the Winter Tire Replacement consumer education video.

- TIA members directly or indirectly control more than 15,000 points of sale.
- Retailers are using the TSSH videos in their showrooms and on their websites because the subject matter is proactive and reinforces positive messages that are in the best interests of their customers.
- As a trusted source and recognized technical expert in the tire industry, TIA has the credibility to ensure that a national consumer education campaign will be utilized and promoted by retailers.

- Consumer education efforts will be best served if they are directed toward providing retailers with the tools and resources they need to educate motorists.
- TIA has already take the initial steps to produce consumer education programs that include effective and accurate messages that focus on safety.
- TIA is committed to continuing the Tire Safety Starts Here program and is willing to partner with organizations and agencies that are interested in delivering information that is consistent with industry guidelines.