



Focus on Waste Tires

Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program

This focus sheet explains the proper handling of waste tires in the State of Washington. It will be useful to citizens, homeowners, and businesses not involved in the tire business.

How can you prolong the life of your tire?

Most tires can last up to 80,000 miles, but they rarely do because of improper maintenance. Proper care can extend the life of your tires, increase gas mileage, and improve handling of your vehicle. You not only will save money, but will also help reduce the number of waste tires you must dispose of or recycle. Try these easy steps:

- **Buy smart.** Choose tires that fit your needs and your car correctly, and buy tires that last at least 80,000 miles.
- **Inflate properly.** Underinflation of your tires can result in lost tire life. Overinflation can result in blowouts or uneven wear.
- **Balance.** Keep tires balanced to avoid shape distortion at high speeds.
- **Rotate.** Rotating tires helps distribute wear evenly.
- **Align.** Improperly aligned tires can increase tire wear dramatically.
- **Avoid sudden starts and stops.** Abrupt stops and starts cause rubber to wear off on the road surface. Stop-and-go traffic wears tire tread faster than steady driving.
- **Avoid excess speeds.** Driving at a high rate of speed causes heat to build up in the tire, rapidly deteriorating the rubber.

What is the problem with waste tires?

- Tires do not break down in the natural environment and can accumulate indefinitely.
- Water can collect in tires stored outside and become a breeding ground for mosquitoes. These tires also offer a nesting place for rodents and other small animals.
- Storage piles of waste tires, whole or shredded, present a fire hazard.
- Landfills have a hard time keeping waste tires buried. Because of their flexibility and air space, tires can work their way to the surface. Whole tires also take up valuable space in landfills.
- Factories that make tires use petroleum and metal, resources that aren't renewable. Tire factories also pollute the air and water. Extending the life of tires reduces the number of waste tires and reduces the need to make new tires.

How do you properly store waste tires?

- You should store waste tires on racks or in a manner that does not allow water to collect in the tire.



- Tires stored inside a building should follow the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) guidelines (NFPA 230, 2003 edition), including storage and fire suppression requirements.

How many waste tires can you store?

- You don't need a license or permit to store fewer than 800 passenger tires. Storage of more than 800 waste tires (or a total of 16,000 pounds of any types of waste tires) requires a waste tire storage license and solid waste handling permit.

How many waste tires can you transport?

- Private residents can transport used tires to a retail outlet for repair or exchange. Make sure the load is properly secured on the vehicle.
- Transport of more than five waste tires for any other purpose requires a waste tire carrier license.

Who will take your waste tires?

- Most tire retail businesses accept waste or used tires, call to confirm.
- Contact your local health department or county public works/solid waste department. Some landfills and transfer stations will accept a limited number of waste tires. Do not put tires into a dumpster when that waste is going to a landfill.
- There are several businesses that will come to your property and pick up your used tires for a charge. Make sure you hire a licensed tire transporter and make sure they deliver the tires to an authorized storage or disposal site.
- The Ecology recycling assistance Web site can help you find a local vendor to pick up your waste tires. Go to <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/recycle/>.
- Dial 1-800-RECYCLE and talk to an operator, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays).

How are waste tires recycled or reused?

- Whole tires serve as marine bumpers, farm feed cover weight, roof shingles, retread, and erosion control.
- Tire bales serve in erosion control, fencing, windbreaks, and road construction.
- Tire shreds serve as septic system aggregate, alternate daily landfill cover, and fuel for cement plants.
- Crumbed rubber from tires finds a use in rubberized asphalt, athletic fields, playground surfaces, landscaping material, equestrian centers, molded rubber products, and traffic cones.

Definitions of some terms:

- **Storage** means placing more than 800 waste automobile tires (or the combined weight equivalent of 16,000 pounds of all types of waste tires) in a manner that is not final disposal of the waste tires.

- **Transportation** means picking up or transporting waste tires for the purpose of storage or final disposal.
- **Used tire** means a tire that will be resold or reused.
- **Waste tire** means tires that are no longer suitable for their original intended purpose because of wear, damage, or defect.

For more information contact:

- Kara Steward at 360-407-6250 or kste461@ecy.wa.gov
- Randy Martin at 360-407-6136 or rama461@ecy.wa.gov
- Ecology Waste Tire homepage at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/tires/>
- Ecology recycling assistance Web site at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/recycle/>.
- Or dial 1-800-RECYCLE between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays).