

SAFETY BULLETIN: Tire Safety

Where rubber meets the road for a concrete delivery professional

First and foremost, if you are in the ready mixed concrete production industry – you're in the trucking business. At the heart of safety around a mixer truck is the need for strict adherence to your company's safety policies when it comes to tire safety. From valve stems to tread depth, understanding the details of tire safety can be a matter of life and death for a driver of a fully loaded, 80,000-pound, mixer truck, travelling at highway speeds. For mixer drivers, tires are literally where the rubber meets the road and making sure the tires are in good shape helps ensure safe travel for drivers and those around them.

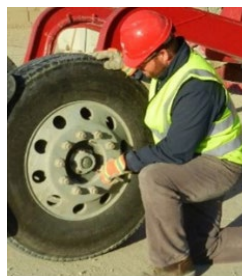
Maybe the most important part of proper tire maintenance for mixer trucks is monitoring tire pressure daily, to verify they are inflated to the correct specifications. Under-inflation is one of the primary reasons for blowouts and rollovers. It's not unusual for tires to lose pressure over time and it's important to inflate them as needed. During the pre-trip inspection process, tires should be at the top of the list for drivers. Some drivers use their boot to kick the tires to check for proper pressure, others use a tire thumper, but most professional drivers use an accurate stick or dial pressure gauge. Most inflation specifications are based on cold inflation at 68f. A hot tire coming off the road can increase pressure by 15%. Some producers pull tires depending on air-loss frequency. Always check tires for wear. The basic tire casing inspection includes checking the sidewall for bulges that may indicate internal damage such as a belt separation. Don't mix tire types on the same axle and avoid recaps on steering axles. Be mindful of cuts in the sidewall that are deep enough to see the body ply. Check for objects penetrating the



tire, such as nails and screws, that can be picked up at construction sites. The tire tread must be at least 2/32 of an inch deep on drive and auxiliary axle tires, and 4/32 on steer tires. Make sure the tires are kept clean and check to make sure nothing has become wedged between any of the dual rear tires. Mixer drivers may not need to be experts on the causes of tire defects, but they should be able to recognize tire issues that could ultimately result in shorter tire life and tire safety.

Tire Safety Do's & Don't

- Think first, know the safety hazards associated with tires
- Tire care training should begin at orientation
- Don't limp-in with a flat dual tire, (call shop for company policy) damage to both tires can occur
- If you hit road debris, find an appropriate place to stop and check for tire damage
- Visually check all tires during the daily pre-trip inspection
- Replace missing valve caps immediately (can be a source of leaking)
- Uneven tire wear can be a sign of underinflation
- Never weld or apply heat to a wheel when the tire is mounted
- Tire and rim servicing should be done by trained personnel



Resources:

[NRMCA: Mixer truck Drivers Manual](#)

[FMCSA: USDOT Tire Advisory Card](#)

[NHTSA: Tire Safety](#)