Airp

PRESS RELEASE

42% of the world's truck tires are retreads

RAW MATERIAL SHORTAGE REVIVES TIRE RETREADING

The price of rubber has increased by 52% over the past two years and is still on the rise. This situation, brought about by the international raw materials crisis, has revived rubber recovery technologies, particularly in the tire sector, where the cost of rubber usually has a very high impact. As a matter of fact, many countries are showing a growing interest in tire retreading, a business that allows saving rubber and therefore crude oil, whose price keeps rising at a dramatic rate. It takes 7 kilos of rubber to make a car tire, and 27 liters of oil are needed, whereas an industrial tire, for which 67/70 kilos of rubber are needed, requires 100 liters of oil. If a tire is not retreaded after its first cycle, this amount of raw materials will get disposed of. Thanks to tire retreading, though, most of it gets recovered, adding only a small amount of raw materials to replace the worn tread.

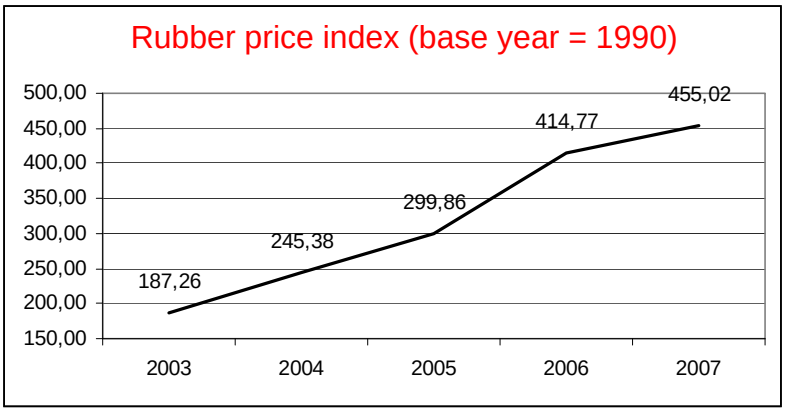

Chart by Airp / Data courtesy of Confindustria

But retreading also delivers other kinds of remarkable benefits, besides the economic one. The problems and threats posed by the pollution of the biosphere, as well as the constant and careless exploitation of its limited resources are now unfortunately more relevant and obvious than ever. Every year, the need to have tires replaced on circulating vehicles entails the disposal of about 180 million tires in Europe (30 million only in Italy) with the negative impact on the environment that can be easily imagined. Retreading an ever-increasing number of tires using frameworks that, after accurate controls, prove to be still good after their first life cycle, helps to protect the environment significantly. In fact, tire retreading allows to extend tire life, reducing scrap tire disposal. Moreover, on safety level, the retreading process is strictly performed in accordance with UNECE Regulations 108 and 109. Practically, the retreading specialist removes the worn tread with specific tools, following well-established techniques, and replaces it with a new one, using the original casing if still good. The complete reliability of this procedure is guaranteed by very accurate mandatory controls and by the fact that retreads are widely employed on such transportation means as planes, trucks and buses, where the mechanical stress is higher. The world average of retreads on trucks is 41.9%, whereas in North America it is 56% and only 34.7% in Italy. The raw materials crisis might offer a good chance of reviving tire retreading also in Italy, for the benefit of the economy and the environment.

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