

How one industry leader is changing the way tires are recycled

Sustainability

HUNTERSVILLE, NC

We rely on tires every day to get from Point A to Point B. While you may not think about tires until it's time to replace them, you can go to work, run errands and visit friends and family near and far because of tires. But what happens to your tires when it is time to replace them?

Most used tires end up in waste dumps and some are even destroyed and burned at end-of-life. According to [Tire Review](#), when tires break down in a landfill, chemicals can leech and contaminate the surrounding ground and water. Also, when stockpiled, tire piles catch water, creating breeding grounds for mosquitoes and other disease-carrying insects. Tires that are burned or accidentally catch fire can burn for several days and emit dangerous smoke with high levels of pollutants.

The tire industry is aware of the issues that end-of-life tires can cause when improperly disposed and wants to find ways to mitigate the environmental impact of their products. That's why many industry leaders are creating better ways to recycle tires while decarbonizing the industry.

One such leader, American Tire Distributors (ATD), is committed to finding better uses for used tires. According to the company, 235 million tires are produced every year, and today 17% of used tires are sent to landfills. While that may not sound like a lot — and shows an improvement compared to previous decades — 17% year after year adds up.

To create a more sustainable business solution helping tire retailers, communities and the environment, ATD has built a recycling initiative that uses a holistic approach — picking up retailers' scrap tires while delivering new tires.

Partnering to increase tire recycling

Finding the right recycling partners is integral to the company's recycling initiative. These recyclers need to be able to identify end-of-life uses that create material re-use. Scrap tires picked up by ATD are not allowed to re-enter the market as used tires. By sending scrap tires to the right end-use, ATD and their partners can create net positive outcomes.

Last year, the company launched its tire recycling program at two of its distribution centers (DCs). Today, Tire Recycling is live in 42 DCs and is serving more than 40 customers out of almost 100 locations. This tire distributor has made it easy for retailers to participate in this recycling program. Participating retailers no longer have excess scrap tires piled up. ATD's tire collection system allows drivers to collect scrap tires along their route, segregate old and new tires in the delivery trucks and return to the DCs with a full load for recycling on the back leg of their route.

Tire recycling for a better tomorrow

ATD has launched its tire recycling program in more than 20 markets and is adding more every month. During the first nine months, ATD's tire recycling has resulted in moving more than 65,000 scrap tires.

ATD tracks greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across operations utilizing their specialized emissions platform. With this platform, ATD measures its reductions as the company works toward a 25% reduction in GHG within operations. Through the ATD Tire Recycling program, ATD has made it possible to avoid approximately 640 MT of CO₂e in GHG emissions.

This recycling plan has the potential to increase vehicle safety by getting used tires off the road, increasing tire circularity by supplying raw materials for new tires and, most importantly, getting scrap tires to the right place as efficiently as possible.

To learn more about ATD's sustainability, visit [our sustainability page](#).

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