



CAR TYRES

WASTE IN THE NETHERLANDS

Six million waste tyres are generated each year in the Netherlands, and some 90% of these are collected separately. It is government policy to encourage producers and importers of tyres and motor vehicles to set up systems whereby all tyres are collected and processed in an environmentally sound manner.

DEFINITION

Used tyres become waste when worn tyres are replaced and when motor vehicles and trailers reach the end of their life.

Used car tyres include retreadable casings which can be re-used for their original purpose, if necessary after further processing. Non-retreadable tyres cannot be re-used as tyres, and must be put to some other beneficial use or disposed of.

PROCESSING OPTIONS

The main processing options for used car tyres are currently:

- immediate re-use (as second-hand tyres);
- re-use as retreads;
- material recycling (granulation of the tyres, crumb rubber used as a feedstock for the manufacture of new rubber products);
- use as fuel (for example in cement kilns and power stations).

The landfill of used tyres was prohibited in 1995.

TARGETS

The Car Tyre (Disposal) Decree of 1995 set targets of 60% re-use (second-hand tyres and retreads), at least 20% material recycling and no more than 20% waste-to-energy (use as fuel in cement kilns and power stations).

QUANTITIES

In recent years re-use has been in the range of 40 to 50% and material recycling has fluctuated between 3 and 15%, with around 45% of the waste stream being burned in cement kilns and power stations. Technical and economic obstacles have prevented re-use and recycling from really taking off. Indeed, the burning of tyres (as a fuel in cement kilns and power stations) has actually been increasing, at the expense of re-use and recycling.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Car Tyre (Disposal) Decree of 1995 requires producers and importers of car tyres and of vehicles and trailers to take back the tyres they sell, or arrange for them to be recovered, and to process them in an environmentally satisfactory manner.



The Decree stipulates that when a company sells a new tyre (for example the garage) it must take back the used tyre which is being replaced (old-for-new scheme). The Decree does not actually make producers and importers responsible for the disposal costs, nor does it specify that the used tyre must be taken back free of charge.

ORGANISATION

As far as the tyres on end-of-life vehicles are concerned, the producers of motor vehicles and trailers, represented by the RAI Association, will sign up to the collection and processing scheme run by Auto Recycling Nederland. This scheme is funded by a system of disposal surcharges and payments, so that motorists do not face any costs for the collection and processing of the tyres when disposing of their cars.

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As far as the used tyres arising in the tyre replacement market are concerned, the car manufacturers and importers, under the banner of the Tyre and the Environment Association (BEM), have taken a quite different, more market-based approach. BEM assumes that garages and tyre fitters will take in the old tyre when fitting a replacement tyre, and will charge the customer accordingly. BEM has built up a network of 20 accredited and certified tyre depots. It tries to encourage garages and tyre fitters to supply the tyres collected only to the accredited tyre depots. These depots then sort, store and transport the used tyres in an environmentally sound manner.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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NB: This is one of a series of factsheets on waste in the Netherlands. The most recent edition can also be found at www.minvrom.nl

PROBLEMS

The producers and importers have not yet managed to set up airtight and systematic collection and processing schemes which are resistant to market fluctuations, or to achieve the targets set in the Car Tyre (Disposal) Decree.

An amendment to the Car Tyre (Disposal) Decree is at present being drafted which would ensure that the holder of car tyres could dispose of them without charge. This will remove the incentive to fly tip car tyres. It will also promote the introduction by producers and importers of a system of disposal surcharges and payments which will provide financial incentives to recycle.