



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

NOV 9 2000

OFFICE OF  
SOLID WASTE AND EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE

Senator Rick Santorum  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C., 20510-3804

Dear Senator Santorum:

Thank you for forwarding the e-mail of October 18, 2000, from your constituent, Mr. Lawrence Dubetsky, concerning the disposal of scrap tires from the Bridgestone/Firestone Inc. recall.

As part of the safety recall issued by the company in August 2000, Bridgestone/Firestone Inc., is working with federal, state, and local authorities to ensure proper handling of all tires collected. Bridgestone/Firestone Inc., which has estimated that the recall will affect 6.5 million tires, has coordinated with its current scrap tire vendors for additional pickups of these scrap tires from company-owned stores. Although 6.5 million tires is a large number to recall and either recycle or dispose of, it is important to note that on average, over 270 million scrap tires are generated in the United States each year.

The recalled scrap tires are transported either directly to a licensed and permitted recycling or disposal facility or directly to a Bridgestone/Firestone distribution facility where they are checked to ensure that they have been rendered useless. These tires are then transported to recycling or disposal facilities for processing. None of these recalled tires are being redistributed or retreaded. The majority of the recalled tires are being shredded and beneficially reused as fuel for power plants or cement kilns, or ground into crumb rubber for recycling into a variety of useful products such as playground mats, asphalt, and soaker irrigation hoses. To obtain further information on what Bridgestone/Firestone Inc. is doing, you may wish to consult their website at: [www.firestonetire.com/indexselect.html](http://www.firestonetire.com/indexselect.html), and click on Voluntary Safety Recall Information.

At EPA we not only encourage the reuse and recycling of scrap tires and other municipal solid waste, but we also support the important management option to dispose of scrap tires. Many scrap tires are incinerated for energy recovery at pulp and paper plants or cement kilns, while others are landfilled. Enclosed is *Summary of Markets for Scrap Tires*, which describes both recycling methods for scrap tires and their use for fuel.

The management of scrap tires, which is a form of municipal solid waste, is handled primarily at the state level. Most states have programs to regulate tire haulers to ensure that they

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take scrap tires to approved facilities for reuse, recycling, combustion for energy recovery, or disposal in landfills. Many states charge fees at some point in the life cycle of the tire such as at the point of disposal, or as a tax on the purchase of new tires, or as a fee when automobiles are registered. These funds are used to clean up scrap tire piles in the state.

If you would like information about scrap tire management activities in Pennsylvania, you may wish to contact Mr. Tom Woy, of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, at 717-787-7381. He is the state-level contact person for scrap tires. I hope this information has been helpful to you.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth A. Cotsworth, Director  
Office of Solid Waste

Enclosure