

TIRE EFFICIENCY FAQ



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What will the proposed tire efficiency standard do?

A: The proposed standard merely requires that replacement tires have comparable efficiency to tires that already come on new vehicles. Consumers will continue to have a robust supply of replacement tires for all vehicle types, as there are now replacement tires that are widely available and that meet the proposed standard.

Q: What are the benefits of more efficient tires?

A: Tire efficiency is a much-needed affordability solution for California drivers. A typical driver of a gasoline car with more efficient tires (comparable to new vehicle tires) will save \$179 of gasoline over the life of a set of tires.ⁱ Across California, more efficient tires will lower drivers' fuel costs by nearly \$1B per year.ⁱⁱ These figures were calculated with gasoline costs of \$4.60 per gallon, and savings would be much higher at current prices.ⁱⁱⁱ

Q: What is the additional cost of more efficient tires?

A: The incremental cost is very low: \$1.50 per tire in Phase 1 (2028-2030) and \$6.50 per tire in Phase 2 (2031 and beyond). These estimates are based on leading, independent cost models from the U.S. EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.^{iv} The estimates reflect the low cost of the technology required to improve tire efficiency.

Q: Will the lowest-cost tires no longer be available under this standard?

A: Tires of all price ranges, including the lowest-cost tires available today, can be made compliant with relatively inexpensive technological improvements. Additionally, there are already low-cost tires on the market that comply with the proposed standards. As indicated above, the added cost per tire of these improvements will be \$1.50 in Phase 1 (2028-2030) and \$6.50 in Phase 2 (2031 and beyond).

Q: Will this reduce the average lifespan of tires?

A: Consumers will not see a reduction in lifespan (also known as treadwear) of replacement tires. CEC collected laboratory data on more than 150 of the most popular tire models in California, as well as real-world data on tire lifespan from Discount Tire's Treadwell™ database. The data is clear: increasing the efficiency of tires does not require reducing their average lifespan. Many tires already perform well on both efficiency and lifespan.^v



Q: Will this worsen safety for tires?

A: It will not. In fact, the proposed standard creates a minimum wet grip standard that will remove some of the least-safe, worst-performing tires from the road.^{vi} This wet grip minimum was proposed by industry and incorporated into the CEC proposal.

Q: How has CEC engaged industry?

A: CEC has conducted a multi-year engagement process with industry and reviewed technical data and feedback from many tire manufacturers. Based on that feedback, CEC has developed a proposed standard that would deliver strong savings for drivers while being technologically feasible for manufacturers.

ⁱ Helvoigt, Ted, Charles Hanks, and Kade Brasel (Evergreen Economics), Ken Rider, and Kyle Harris. 2026. Economic Impact Analysis of the Replacement Tire Efficiency Program. California Energy Commission. Publication Number: CEC-600-2026-001. Table 6 on Page 6.

ⁱⁱ Ibid, Table 14 on Page 15.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid, Table 9 on Page 8.

^{iv} U.S. EPA and U.S. DOT. August 2012. *Draft Joint Technical Support Document: Proposed Rulemaking for 2017–2025 Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emission Standards and Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards*. Pages 3-209 and 3-210. For additional methodological discussion, see Blackburn, Bill, Julie Burbridge, Andrew Hom, Ralph Lee, Ken Rider, David Sakai, Sebastian Serrato, and Rachel Shuen. 2026. *California’s Proposed Replacement Tire Efficiency Program*. California Energy Commission. Publication Number: CEC- 600-2026-012. Pages 57-60.

^v Ibid, Pages 52-55, Tire Wear Data in Appendix B.

^{vi} Ibid, Pages 45-50.

