

# Tire maintenance – do your PART

**P**roper tire care and maintenance for your municipal fleet can be a very simple procedure. The Rubber Manufacturers Association (RMA) recommends a monthly maintenance check, as well as one prior to every long trip (and be sure to include the spare).

The maintenance checklist is easy to remember if you recall the phrase ‘Do your PART,’ since PART is an acronym for **p**ressure, **a**lignment, **r**otation and **t**read.

## Pressure

Air pressure enables a tire to support its load. Under-inflation can cause unnecessary tire stress, irregular wear, loss of control and accidents. Did you know that tires can lose up to half of their air pressure and not appear to be flat? Therefore, always use a proper tire gauge to check the air pressure and ensure that the tires contain the correct pressure.

## Alignment

Constant driving on rough roads or a run-in with a curb or pothole can throw a vehicle’s front end out of alignment and cause uneven and rapid tire tread wear (as well as improperly operating brakes or shock absorbers, bent wheels, and worn bushings). These conditions can also lead to vehicle handling

problems. Have an authorized technician check the alignment periodically to ensure everything is as it should be.

## Rotation

A regular rotation of tires can result in more uniform tread wear. Rotation can also indicate a vehicle’s alignment is amiss. The general guideline for tire rotation is approximately every 6,000 miles, but first consult with your owner’s manual(s) as some tires (e.g., uni-directional tires) cannot be rotated in traditional manners and others have specific rotation periods. Sometimes front and rear tires on a vehicle use different pressures. In these cases, check inflation of all tires following rotation and adjust them according to the figures recommended for each wheel position by the OEM.

## Tread

When a tire’s tread is worn, it affects that tire’s ability to grip the road in adverse conditions. Visually check your tires for uneven wear, damage, and any sharp objects that may be lodged between the treads. All tires have ‘wear bars’ – small, raised bars of rubber in the groove that indicate when tires are worn out. If tread is worn down to the wear bars, it’s time to

purchase a new tire. Do not link ‘tread wear grades’ with your projected tire mileage. Tire performance depends on a number of variables including vehicle condition, road surface(s), driving habits, weather and service practices.

Doing your ‘PART’ for your tires is crucial, but good driving habits can also help extend tire life. Emphasize to drivers the importance of:

- Keeping within speed limits
- Avoiding fast starts, stops and turns
- Avoiding potholes and other objects on the road
- Not running over curbs or rubbing tires against curbs while parking
- Not overloading the vehicle – check with owner’s manual(s) for the maximum recommended load for your vehicle(s).

The following tire companies are MTCML members. Please visit your local representative for your tire needs.

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## Legal Corner continued from page 45

As a result of these two decisions (and pending any possible appeal of the St. Andrews decision), we are left with what, on their face, appear to be conflicting decisions: one upholds the validity of a stand-alone ILO by-law, and the second has struck same down as being invalid. On closer reflection, it may be that the decisions can be reconciled by the factual distinction that, in the St. Andrews case, there was an existing development plan and zoning by-law in place. Whether this distinction justifies the different decisions is open to debate, however this point is emphasized in the reasons for decision.

What lessons then exist for municipalities in light of these two decisions? In my view, there are a few:

1. First, municipalities that have passed a detailed zoning by-law regulating land-use should look first to that by-law and any necessary amendments to be made thereto in order to control or regulate ILOs. In light of the St. Andrews decision and pending any appeal of that decision, a stand alone ILO by-law passed by a municipality that already has a zoning by-law regulating land-

use may be subject to challenge.

2. For municipalities that do not yet have a development plan and/or zoning by-law in place, two avenues of regulation appear to be open:
  - (a) One would be to initiate proceedings to create the development plan and zoning by-law, and while those proceedings were on-going, to seek a ministerial order under section 57(1) of *The Planning Act*, declaring lands of the municipality to be an interim development control area;
  - (b) If the ministerial order is refused, as was the case in Stuartburn, the Stuartburn decision does leave the door open for municipalities without a comprehensive zoning by-law to pass stand alone ILO by-laws as an interim measure. Any municipality contemplating such a stand-alone by-law should look at the reasons for decision in the Stuartburn and St. Andrews decisions carefully and seek advice from their counsel on the nature and scope of the by-law so as to ensure that the by-law will be enforceable. ●

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