



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Are Canadians making safe tire choices for winter driving?

Survey shows nearly one-third of Canadians think all-seasons are safe for severe winter conditions; few drivers know what the winter tire symbol means

VERNON, BC—A Kal Tire winter driving survey confirms many Canadians aren't making safe tire choices for winter driving: Two-thirds of motorists don't know how to tell if a tire is winter-rated, and most have misperceptions about when it's safe to use all-season tires.

According to the survey, which polled 1,664 motorists from BC to Ontario, 89 per cent of Canadian motorists state they encounter severe winter driving conditions at least occasionally, including 35 per cent who face the conditions regularly. Yet one-third of motorists plan on using all-season tires this winter; 41 per cent of those drivers feel all-season tires are "fine."

"We thought it was important to understand not just which tires people are choosing in winter, but why—what are the knowledge gaps that could be putting drivers at risk?" says Mike Butcher, regional director, urban retail stores, Kal Tire. "This survey shows many Canadians aren't aware of the capabilities of different tires or how to make safe tire choices for the winter driving conditions they face."

Results showed that 66 per cent of Canadian motorists don't know the difference between all-season and all-weather tires.

"People indicated they're not using winter tires because they don't want or need to change over to a second set of tires," says Butcher. "We want to educate those drivers about how the all-weather tire might be a safer and more suitable tire."

All-season tires are designed for warm, dry and mild wet conditions in temperatures above +7C. Winter tires are needed for traction in cold temperatures, once it starts to dip below +7C, as well as snow, ice and slush. All-weather tires are winter designated, bearing the mountain snowflake symbol, but can also be driven year-round without wearing prematurely in the summer—eliminating the need for tire changeovers or storage.

Key regional and national survey highlights include:

- 58% of Canadian drivers say they will use winter tires this winter. That number is 43% in Saskatchewan and 54% in Manitoba.
- 89% of Canadian drivers encounter severe winter conditions at least occasionally. In Saskatchewan, the number is 95% and in Manitoba it's 94%.
- Only 32% of Canadian drivers recognize that the mountain snowflake symbol is the way to tell if a tire is safe for all winter driving conditions. That recognition is 30% in Saskatchewan, 35% in Manitoba and just 29% in Winnipeg.
- Only 39% of Saskatchewan drivers and 29% of Manitoba drivers think there's a difference between the all-season and the all-weather tire.

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Weather data across Canada shows the average temperature in all major cities drops below +7°C in November. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the average temperature falls below +7°C in October and continues until early May.

“Once it starts dipping below the +7°C mark, the rubber of an all-season tire hardens, loses traction, and the tread blocks can get really clogged with snow and slush so it’s not a safe choice even in mild winter conditions,” says Bill Gardiner, an automotive expert, interprovincial licensed mechanic and Kal Tire spokesperson. “In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, we’ve got big stretches of exposed winter roads where severe winter conditions are common. For these provinces, a dedicated winter tire makes sense. However, if you are a snowbird driving south, and want a year-round tire, the all-weather tire might be the right choice.”

“Canada has such diverse and unpredictable weather, and a lot of even typically mild regions have seen unexpected extremes in recent years,” says Butcher. “Everyone wants to know they’ll have reliable traction when it counts, so if your region doesn’t experience the harsh winter conditions that call for a dedicated winter tire, the all-weather is the other safe tire choice for winter.”

About Kal Tire

Kal Tire is Canada’s largest independent tire dealer and one of North America’s largest commercial tire dealers. Kal Tire’s Mining Tire Group is an international leader in mining tire service and supply, servicing more than 150 mine sites across five continents. The company has warehouse facilities across Canada servicing more than 250 Kal Tire retail and commercial stores. Kal Tire owns and operates 10 truck tire retread facilities across Canada, plus five earthmover retreading facilities located in Canada, the United Kingdom, Chile, and Ghana. The company employs more than 6,500 team members. For more information, visit www.KalTire.com.

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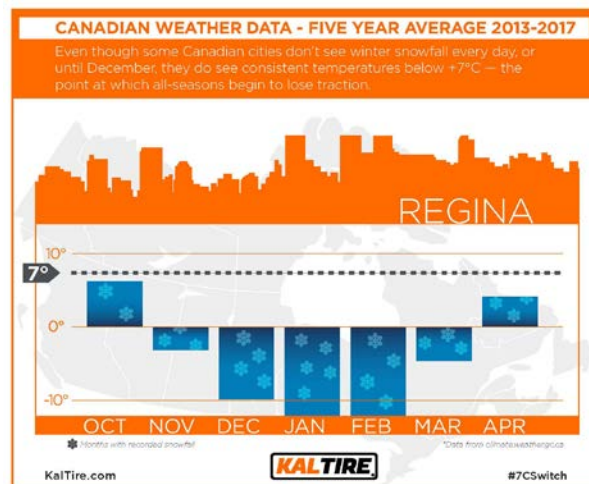
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