

# Tyre recycling on a growth trajectory

A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP HAS ALLOWED AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST TYRE RECYCLER TO DOUBLE ITS RECYCLING OPERATION, THE COMPANY SAYS.

Australia's largest and oldest recycler of tyres continues to expand its operations across Australia off the back of strong support from retailers, Tyrecycle says.

The company, which began in 1992

has doubled its recycling operation since partnering with Tasmanian horticulture firm Barwicks seven months ago.

Jim Fairweather, Tyrecycle CEO, says since the partnership launched

last year, the percentage of tyres being recycled has grown from 30 per cent to 60 per cent.

"This equates to around 24,000 tyres per month or around 288,000 per year," Jim says.

"In the last few months we've had another nine retailers come on board, taking our total in Tasmania to 25, which represents a significant win for the environment."

Tyres previously going to landfill or stockpiled are now being processed through a purpose-built plant near Hobart.

From there, the tyres are transported to Tyrecycle's state-of-the-art recycling plant in Melbourne, where they are repurposed for such uses as replacing fossil fuels as an alternate source of energy.

"The majority of used passenger and truck tyres are converted into tyre-derived fuel (TDF), with around 145,000 tonnes exported out of Australia every year.

"The extremely high calorific value of TDF makes it an attractive alternative fuel on an international scale."

A recent report by the Australian Tyre Recyclers Association (ATRA) identified that end-of-life tyre by-product produces significantly lower



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volumes of carbon dioxide (CO) than coal. The report stated that replacing one tonne of black coal with one tonne of TDF can save emissions of up to 1.05 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere.

Jim explains that TDF addresses the challenging waste problem many industries face as well as providing a cheaper rate than coal.

He adds that recycled tyres are also used for building insulation, road surfacing, brake pads, playgrounds, athletic tracks and other rubber surfaces.

He says that key to the organisation's success is a strict auditing process and "chain of custody" guarantee, which allows the organisation to track the waste product and ensures it reaches the intended destination.

"We're committed to responsibly managing end-of-life tyres across our national network, with a focus on delivering an industry-led zero waste to landfill solution for waste tyres across the country.

"To that end, we're heartened



Tyres are being re-purposed into fuels.

by the take-up in Tasmania which, unlike most other Australian states and territories, it yet to introduce state-led regulations on stockpile limits and landfill levies. Without those disincentives, it's incumbent on customers to ask retailers whether their old tyres are going to landfill or being recycled and support those doing the right thing."

Tyrecycle receives 13.5 million tyres

annually or about 25 per cent of the 500,000 tyres replaced in Australia each year.

The company notes the majority of these are processed within 24 hours of reaching one of its facilities.

Other members of the ATRA collect and process a further 15 per cent of the waste tyres generated annually in Australia.

The remainder are generally stockpiled or exported as whole-baled tyres, potentially causing biosecurity and environmental risks for receiving countries, while end-of-life mine tyres and conveyor belts are almost universally buried onsite.

With a national network of collection and processing capabilities, the company continues to be a market leader of tyre recycling, including Australia's largest crumbing plant based at Somerton in Melbourne.

Tyrecycle operates five secure processing facilities, 12 specialised rubber shredders, five granulators, and three large scale mills and says it is the only company in the industry to have a processing plant in each state of Australia. ■



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