



RAVEN RECYCLING

Our Commitment is the Environment

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TIRE RECYCLING

Yukon tires are heading south. Used tires, that is.

And they are going to be recycled.

As anyone who has purchased a tire in the Territory will attest, an extra five dollars is tacked onto the sale price of vehicle tires. This money is used to ensure Yukon tires get recycled.

When tires are used, they can be dropped off at most Yukon landfills. The Yukon goes through about 25,000 tires a year.

Tires are stored in special areas at landfills.

When enough have been accumulated, they are trucked out to Alberta.

Recently in Alberta, a shipment of Yukon tires was shredded and then sent to a landfill. But not for disposal.

The shredded tires are used as part of the construction of the landfill.

When a landfill is built, it usually consists of scooping a big hole in the ground.

The base of this hole needs a leachate liner, usually consisting of clay, gravel and plastic sheeting layers. This prevents toxic and hazardous fluids from leaking into the groundwater table.

However, why use gravel for one of the layers when shredded tires can act as a substitute.

It is ironic that no landfill in the Yukon has this form of liner, yet Yukon shredded tires are heading south to be part of an Outside one.

Small portions of tires, known as rubber crumb, are the nuts and bolts of using tires in new products.

Crumbling requires either a chemical process to break the tire up, or a mechanical system.

This separates the rubber portion of the tire from the metal bits.

Inside most tires are thin metal wires that give the tire strength.

If a tire is cut up these wires stick out and can hurt people and animals.



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The rubber portion of the tire has to be removed from the metal wires to provide the rubber crumb.

The crumb can be added to asphalt to make a road surface.

This type of road reduces rutting.

In 2004 about 30 kilometres of Alberta's roads were paved using this method. It required 100,000 tires.

Testing will continue over the next few years to see how it handles the cold winters.

Other uses for tires have been developed.

The crumb can be used as ground cover in parks and arenas.

It can be a component of mats and tiles. Raven Recycling has some of these mats.

When a happy recycling is receiving his or her refund at the Raven cash register, they are standing on some black mats.

These mats are made from crumbled up tires.

Although tires are slowly finding reuse markets, it is best to care for vehicle tires so that they last as long as possible.

Ensure air pressure is correct, and drive correctly.

Going from zero to sixty in ten seconds or less is not good for tire tread. Ditto for braking in a similar manner.

When the tire reaches the end of its useful life, ensure it is added to the tire section of a Yukon landfill.

This will allow it to be shipped Outside for recycling.

For more information on Alberta's tire recycling programs, visit www.trma.com.

Lewis Rifkind is an employee of the Raven Recycling Society. Some information for this article came from The Pegg (www.apegga.com).