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HALF OF THE TYRES WE REMOVE ARE ILLEGAL, WARNS DORSET TYRE TECHNICIAN

A technician at a tyre and vehicle maintenance centre on Wimborne Road, in the Bournemouth suburb of Kinson, is urging motorists to check the condition of their tyres ahead of the May half-term, when many families will set off on long journeys.

Darren Rankin of ATS Euromaster warns that more than half of the tyres he and his colleagues have replaced in Kinson this year have had less than 1.6mm of tread remaining – meaning they were illegal when customers drove onto the forecourt.

He blames a rise in the number of vehicles on the road with low profile and wider tyres, which makes it more difficult for drivers to check the inside edge of the tread.

“At a quick glance the tyres may look ok, but if the tracking is out – a common result of hitting a kerb or pothole – then the tread on the inside may have completely worn away, right down to the steel cords. Often a driver won’t realise until it’s too late.”

A bald tyre, or one with the steel cords visible, is a ticking time bomb which risks losing its structure with every rotation. As the only part of a vehicle in contact with the road’s surface, the impact upon vehicle handling and stopping distances is significant.

Darren also blames the economic climate for pushing locals to run their tyres for longer. “We frequently see motorists who have tightened their belts and will do pretty much anything to avoid buying a new tyre. Even when we point to rubber which is at or just below the legal limit, they’ll sometimes elect to keep it fitted a little bit longer.

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“All we can do is provide honest and expert advice – we’re not the Police, we can’t force them to fit new tyres. But all drivers should know that if they’re involved in an accident, an illegal tyre can void their vehicle insurance policy, potentially leaving them without cover.”

Darren, 29, has worked at ATS Euromaster in Kinson for 12 months and has been in the motor trade for nearly eight years. The Kinson location is part of a network of five ATS Euromaster centres across Dorset, and more than 340 nationwide.

ATS Euromaster advises motorists to check their tyre tread depth, condition and pressures at least once a month and before any long journey. Motorists can also call into any ATS Euromaster centre for a free tyre safety check – with no obligation, and no appointment required.

Department for Transport statistics from 2013 show that illegal, defective or underinflated tyres were the most common vehicle defect contributing to [accidents in Great Britain](#) where a Police officer attended the scene.

Tyres and the law

If you drive with damaged or extremely worn tyres you risk being fined, receiving points on your driving license, invalidating your vehicle insurance policy and endangering lives.

Car and van tyres must be fit for purpose. This means being compatible with the tyres fitted to the other wheels, not have any lump, bulge or tear caused by separation or partial failure of the structure, not have a cut or tear in excess of 25mm or 10% of the

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sectional width of the tyre, whichever is the greater, and which is deep enough to reach the ply or cord. Furthermore, no part of the ply or cord can be exposed.

The remaining tread depth must also be at least 1.6mm throughout a continuous band in the centre three-quarters of the tread and around the entire circumference.

For expert tyre advice visit your local ATS Euromaster centre or www.atseuromaster.co.uk/tyres

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About ATS Euromaster

Birmingham-based [ATS Euromaster Ltd](http://www.atseuromaster.co.uk), part of the [Euromaster Group](http://www.euromaster.com), was established in 1965 and operates approximately 345 centres, more than 820 service vans and employs nearly 2,600 people, providing coverage across Great Britain. It is the country's largest comprehensive tyre distributor, supplying tyres for cars, vans, trucks, buses/coaches, materials handling equipment, agricultural machinery and construction plant. The company's expertise also extends to car and van service, maintenance and repair (SMR), including: menu-driven servicing, Class IV & Class VII MoT tests, brakes, batteries, shock absorbers, oil, exhausts, fault diagnostics and air-conditioning servicing. ATS Euromaster is accredited by both [safecontractor](http://www.safecontractor.com) and the [Contractors Health and Safety Scheme](http://www.chas.co.uk) (CHAS) and has been granted a [Royal Warrant](http://www.royalwarrant.gov.uk) as tyre specialists to Her Majesty The Queen. It is also an official 'industry partner' to the Freight Transport Association's [Van Excellence](http://www.vanexcellence.com) programme. For further information visit: <http://www.atseuromaster.co.uk>



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