

There are still tyres with toxic high aromatic oils on the Swedish winter tyre market.

It is now seven years since the large tyre manufacturer Gislaved in Sweden produced the first winter tyre without the toxic and carcinogenic high aromatic oil (HA oil). The tyre ended up as a "test winner" from a functional point of view in a number of Swedish motor magazines. Since then all of the big tyre companies on the Swedish market have developed winter tyres without HA oil. There are still tyres though, offered on the Swedish market with almost one litre of an oil hazardous to health and environment, without any advantages from a functional or even from an economical point of view.

Projekt Grön Kemi (The Green Chemistry Project) of Gothenburg, which is run by a number of environmentally active government agencies and organisations in West Sweden, has during a number of years tried to influence the large tyre manufacturers on the Swedish market to abandon HA oils in car tyres. HA oil is a hazardous waste from the refining of lubricant base stocks and contains very high amounts of polyaromatic hydrocarbons. Many of these polyaromatic compounds have both carcinogenic and environmentally adverse effects. A normal winter tyre can contain up to one litre of such an oil.

In 1997 Gislaved Tyres of Sweden (within the Continental group) presented the first winter tyre without HA oil on the Swedish market. The tyre became a "test winner" in a number of functional tyre tests in Swedish motor magazines. This influenced the international tyre producers to the extent that within a couple of years every large tyre manufacturer on the Swedish market could present a first class winter tyre without HA oil – at the same price as before.

The Swedish market of 2 million winter tyres sold each year, has gradually changed and consists now mainly of tyres without the toxic oil. An important reason for this change has been that large consumers as cities, hospital organisations, big companies etc. have decided only to buy tyres without the HA oil to their automotive fleets. Today there is no argument for buying or selling winter tyres with HA oil, either for environmental, functional or economical reasons.

It is therefore surprising that Project Grön Kemi, when it makes its annual run-through and analysis of the winter tyre market, finds from many major manufacturers winter tyres that still contain HA oil. A large portion of the high speed winter tyres, for example, are produced with toxic oil. Other brands like Hankook W 404, Aurora W 403, Road Champ also contain carcinogenic oil without due cause.

Projekt Grön Kemi has the only complete, updated and controlled list of all winter tyres on the Swedish market that are free from high aromatic oil in the tread. The list can be found on the homepage www.gronkemi.nu Choose your winter tyres only from this list and show the manufacturers that these are the only tyres we want on the market.

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