

Tire owners swamp local distributor

By ERIC BENJAMINSON
Of the Emerald

The largest tire recall in history has left a Eugene tire dealer swamped with requests for free tire exchanges.

Ken Hodgkinson, manager of the Firestone Tire and Rubber company, outlet at 185 E. 11th Ave., says Firestone's recent recall of 10 million belted radial tires caused a demand for exchanges that has already exceeded the amount of replacement tires available at his store.

"Our tires come out of a Portland warehouse, which is continuing its statewide shipments. We hope to fill our back orders within two to three weeks, but in the meantime we just have to put our customers on a waiting list," Hodgkinson says.

Hodgkinson estimated that so far about 150 replacements have been made out of his outlet store and says the effects of the recall may continue for "at least six more months."

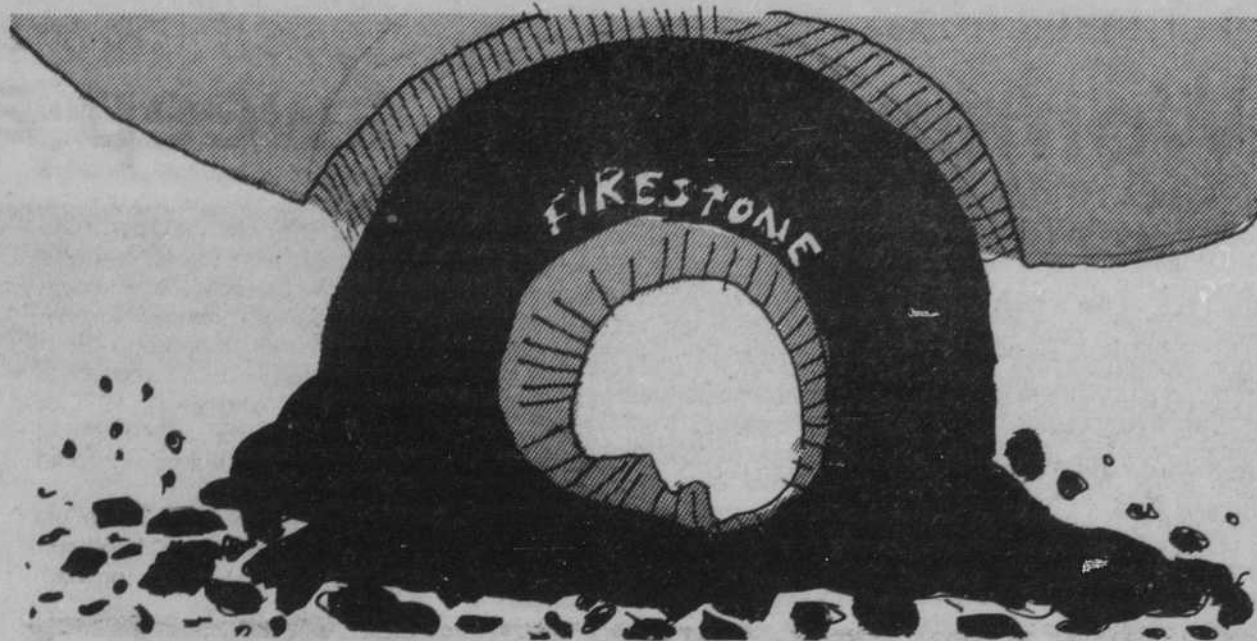
would indicate that the tire was produced in the 38th week of 1975.

Firestone TPC steel-belted radials produced during the same period are also eligible for recall. These tires are the original equipment made by Firestone for General Motors cars.

Some private-label tire brands made by Firestone, such as the "Grappler 8000" sold by Montgomery Ward and Shell Oil's Super Shell Steel Radials, may also be exchanged for a free replacement.

The faulty tires are being replaced with Firestone 721's, which have been on the market for about 2 years and have recently been improved with a new steel-wrapping process. Hodgkinson says the replacement is a "super tire, one that had given us no problems."

If a Firestone 500 was traded in before the recall announcement, the consumer is entitled to receive cash payment refund. In addition,



Graphic by Tom Ettel

tomobiles.

A retailer at the Firestone outlet at Valley River Center refused to speculate on the number of tires his store had sold.

Instead, he suggested con-

sumers call Firestone headquarters in Akron, Ohio, (216) 379-6000.

Hodgkinson advises consumers to bring their cars in to a station, where the tires can be in-

spected to see if they meet recall requirements. If they are eligible, an appointment can then be made with the station for an exchange—as soon as new replacements arrive.

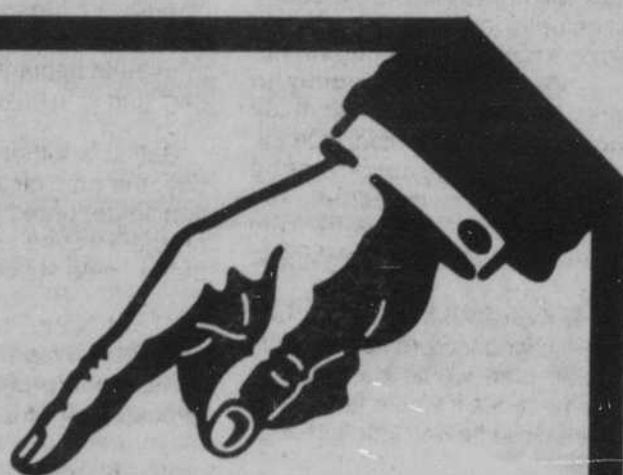
Firestone '500' recall sparks exchange rush

The recall affects Firestone 500's made between Sept. 1, 1975 and May 1, 1976.

To find out the week and year of the tire's manufacture, consumers must look at the last three digits of the Department of Transportation code that appears on either the inside or outside sidewall of each tire. For example, the number 385

Firestone has offered to exchange every '500' purchased before Sept. 1, 1975 for a new tire at half the price of the new tire.

Hodgkinson cannot estimate how many tires sold from his outlet are now subject to the recall because most tires were original equipment on General Motors au-



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