

State Representative
Cliff Bentz
House District 60

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Rep. Bentz Updated on Snow Tire Study

SALEM-- In the 2013 Legislative Session, Representative Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario), as Vice-Chair of the House Transportation & Economic Development Committee, was instrumental in preventing a proposed ban on studded snow tires from becoming law. The Legislature instead asked that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) update an earlier study of studded snow tires. Paul Mather (ODOT Highway Division Manager) and Betsy Imholt (ODOT Government Relations) visited Representative Bentz on Tuesday, February 4, 2014, to discuss the focus and progress of the study.

ODOT verified that the study will include, as requested by Rep. Bentz, a review of a number of national and international studies comparing the effectiveness of studded snow tires to the effectiveness of newer design, non-studded snow tires.

Said Rep. Bentz: "For years studded snow tires have helped keep Oregonians safe, particularly those who live in the vast areas of Eastern Oregon, where hundred mile drives in hazardous winter weather are the norm, rather than the exception. People living in my District (Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur and part of Lake Counties) know just how comforting it is to have studded snow tires protecting the vehicle's occupants while driving between places like Burns and Lakeview, or John Day and Baker City."

"It makes sense to see if this perception of safety is still warranted, given advances in tire technology, and, if studded tires are still a good answer to a slick road, to have updated facts to back up arguments I have used in supporting the need to keep studded tires available. With this in mind, I have asked that the study include a review of research done on differences between studded snow tires and the newest high-tech, non-studded snow tires. Insight into the difference between advanced design, non-studded snow tires and snow tires with studs is important both for our personal safety and to make sure that when we buy those four studded snow tires for our car we are doing so for good reasons. This study, although certainly not exhaustive, will provide valuable information for all of us."

The report will be finalized sometime in the Fall of 2014 and will be then be available on the Oregon Department of Transportation's website.

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