

August 2, 2007

STENEHJEM WARNS OF DEFECTIVE TIRES

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem warns consumers about potentially dangerous tires. These tires were manufactured from 2002 to 2006 for light trucks, sports utility vehicles (SUVs), and vans. The tires that have been identified as potentially dangerous were made by Hangzhou Zhongce Rubber Co. Ltd. (HZ) in China and distributed in the United States under the names Westlake, YKS and Compass.

These tires were imported into the United States by Foreign Tire Sales, Inc. (FTS), the largest tire distributor of these tires, and have been sold by many hundreds of tire dealers including dealers in North Dakota.

FTS filed a Non-compliance Report with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (“NHTSA”) on June 11, 2007 stating that certain tires may not meet the minimum specifications provided to the tire manufacturer and may be unsafe. As many as 270,000 of the tires may be missing “gum strips,” an important part of a tire related to the prevention of thread separation.

“These defective tires have the potential to cause an accident resulting in death or serious bodily injury,” said Stenehjem.

It is uncertain at this time which tires manufactured by HZ may be defective. Because of the seriousness of tire separation, Stenehjem urges consumers to check the sidewalls of their tires for the brand name, size, model and DOT number. If the DOT number contains FTS as part of the number, the tire may be subject to a future recall. Affected tires contain a tire size starting with “LT” as well as a DOT number that starts with “7D” and ends in either “02,” “03,” “04,” or “05.”

Specific tire numbers and sizes affected by this warning are:

- LT225/75R 16 CR 861
- LT235/75R 15 CR861 CR857
- LT235/85 16 CR 860 CR861 CF857
- LT245/75R 16 CR860 CR861 CR857
- LT265/75R 16 CR860 CR861 CR857
- LT310X10.5 15 CR861 CR857

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“If you think the tires on your vehicle may fall under this warning, you should contact the dealer about a tire safety inspection. Unless the NHTSA issues a recall notice, however, a dealer is not required to perform a free tire safety inspection. You should not drive your vehicle for long distances, particularly on hot roads, until the tires have been checked,” said Stenehjem.

Stenehjem advised consumers to keep receipts for any charges in case of future reimbursements by FTS.

If an inspection indicates that the vehicle tires may be unsafe, contact NHTSA by calling its toll-free Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236, TTY: 1-800-424-9153 and the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division toll-free at 1-800-472-2600. Although at this time NHTSA has not called for a recall of any of these tires, an official recall of at least some of these tires may occur soon.

[Tire Information Photo](#)

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