

# Get rid of tired tires, get new winter ones

By Amanda Lee

The first snowfall of the winter has hit Calgary and now drivers must decide whether to equip their vehicles with winter tires or stick with all-seasons.

"All-season tires will get you through a winter season, but you will have to drive more attentively and cautiously," said Aaron Mooney, who works as shop foreman at Calgary Hyundai in north-east.

Despite owning vehicles with both types of tires on them, Mooney believes winter tires are more suitable and safer for Calgary's unpredictable weather.

"I think that winter tires are necessary for light duty applications such as cars, vans and light trucks," he said.

"Winter tires offer better traction due to softer rubber compound and tire design," said Mooney. "No matter what speed you're at, you will

be better off with winter tires over all-seasons."

The price of winter tires does come steep, so it is important to know that not every brand of all season tires is created equally. Some of them could potentially make it through Calgary's rough winters.

"If you can find a [all-season] tire that is a bit aggressive, you should be okay," Mooney said.

Patrick Brown-Harrison, a SAIT automotive apprenticeship instructor of 13 years, believes it all comes down to how much the driver is willing to compromise in regards to their safety and how they normally handle their vehicle.

"Any time you have all-season tires you are compromising between summer tires and winter tires," he said.

"This creates a potential issue. When you create a blend or an average you will lose, or give something up."

The traction a vehicle has

Wondering where to buy winter tires? Here are a few places...

✦ **Kal-Tire**

Michelin X-ICE® Xi2™ Starting from \$115.10

✦ **Canadian Tire**

Goodyear Ultra Grip Starting from \$108.99

✦ **Wal-Mart**

Dunlop Graspic DS-3 Starting from \$111.00

✦ **Blaskin & Lane**

\$50 American Express Gift Card with the purchase of four Bridgestone Blizzak tires

is ultimately what counts in winter driving, and Brown-Harrison feels winter tires offer the grip drivers need.

"They will offer control during braking and collision avoidance manoeuvres," he said in regards to winter tires.

"They have larger channels and sypens to insure that water, slush, and snow can evacuate the tread faster and efficiently."

However, both Mooney and Brown-Harrison agree when it comes to purchasing

either type of tire, the decision is based on safety not price.

"If students budget for tires they will have at least six months before they need winter tires," Brown-Harrison said.

"Put money aside and then purchase them. There are always sales on winter tires and wheels. There are also used tires for sale."

Niki Ardo, a second-year psychology student at Mount Royal University, has never

driven without winter tires on her car during Calgary's snow season, but she also doesn't need to reach into her wallet in order to afford this luxury.

"My parents pay for my winter tires, so I'm lucky," Ardo said.

"But if I had to buy my own, it'd be harder to justify spending the money on winter tires from a student financial standpoint."

She also understands why some students don't splurge on winter tires due to storage reasons or inconvenience.

"It's a pain to have your car in the shop for a couple days to get your tires switched, and if I lived in residence or in a tiny apartment, I'd have nowhere to keep four extra tires," she said.

"When it comes down to it, I feel safer in my car with winter tires on, and my car has never slid once on me."

# To tweet or not to tweet? Ask Nenshi

By Richard Hardisty

Real mayors don't tweet.

At least that's what some mainstream Calgary news outlets have been saying.

But some young Calgarians believe that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, being accessible is what politics is all about, and using Twitter and other social media tools is the way for a politician to stay in touch.

A recent column by Karin Klassen in The Herald suggested that Mayor Naheed Nenshi was spending too much time on the social media website Twitter, and such a distraction may be detrimental to his job.

Despite Klassen's concerns, for many young voters a candidate or leader's social media presence can play an integral role in determining whether this voting group will support them.

"It's one thing to hop on the social media bandwagon to get elected, but someone who is willing and able to maintain it after the fact gets big points in my books," said Kyle MacQuarrie.

MacQuarrie, a Mount



Mayor Nenshi has recently received attention in the media for his use of social media

Royal University student in his early 30s, said the maintenance is huge part for him because it means the candidate remains accessible while they're in office.

Rob Ford, Toronto's current mayor, and Gregor Robertson, Vancouver's current mayor, both have active Twitter profiles, as does New York

Mayor Mike Bloomberg.

This type of social media presence isn't just limited to mayors either.

At least half of Calgary's 14 aldermen have Twitter profiles, with activity levels ranging from almost none (61 total tweets from Ward 14 Ald. Peter Demong) to highly active (just shy of 6,000

tweets from Ward 8 Ald. John Mar.)

The criticism hasn't slowed Mayor Nenshi's tweeting down.

He was especially active in the hours following the major windstorm that tore through Calgary on Nov. 27, tweeting information about the city's efforts to restore the downtown core to a functional state.

"Nenshi usually tweets useful stuff," Damien Prud'homme, 28, said.

"He was tweeting until after midnight about the status of the core after the storm, which I thought was cool."

For some voters, the content of the information provided by a social media platform is just as important as having one.

"It's good as long as they use it to disseminate actual information instead of nonsense," Brent Reuther, 26, said.

The general consensus is clear: Accessibility is important.

With the rise of the Internet, people are becoming more and more accustomed to the idea of immediate ac-

cessibility.

As politicians (and campaign managers) who are social media savvy, including Mayor Nenshi, Alberta Premier Allison Redford and President Barack Obama, continue to become active in campaigning and in the political scene, it is likely the notion of an arms length disconnect between voter and candidate, or leader, will be a thing of the past.

When Nenshi was elected, his campaign was praised for its use of social media, though it is difficult to put into quantifiable numbers what impact it had.

But a Leger Marketing poll conducted a week before the election showed Nenshi's support among the 18-34 age group swelling from nine per cent at the beginning of his campaign to 43 per cent.

Graham King, a 29-year-old former Calgarian, summed up his feelings about the situation succinctly via Facebook:

"Didn't social media help Nenshi win?"

# The Calgary Zoo lighting up the night



Photo by Patricia Riley

By Patricia Riley

Walking through a festive display of Christmas lights, while all bundled up and sipping hot chocolate at the zoo has become a popular holiday tradition for many Calgarians.

This year, Zoolights, which is sponsored by Enmax, will be open from Nov. 25 to Jan. 7, from 6 to 9 p.m. nightly.

Lory Ros, the guest relations manager for the zoo, says Zoolights is almost always busy, depending on the weather of course.

"If it's really cold than we're not busy, people would rather stay inside," says Ros.

People, particularly couples, love Zoolights for its festive atmosphere, she says.

"Sometimes people even have gift exchanges here," says Ros.

Calgarian Meghan Paul,

19, says she attends every year, even though for her, it's always the same.

"I love it, but sometimes I wish they had more lights than they already do. Either way, it's a fun time," says Paul.

Vanessa Friesen, 30, says she and her husband just love Zoolights.

"From the Christmas carolers to the fire pits, it's so festive," says Friesen.

Friesen and her husband are planning on making the Calgary Zoolights an annual tradition for their four month old son, Roman.

"They do an awesome set up every year, we can't wait to go," she says.

This year, Zoolights will feature two new light exhibits: CandyLand and an Ode to Canada.

Other highlights include ice carving demonstrations performed by Frozen Memo-



Photo by Patricia Riley

ries every Friday and Saturday night, different kinds of "Wishing Trees" and the chance to write one's own wish and hang it on the Zoo's own Wishing Tree, and Friday and Saturday night performances by local choirs.

Food bank donations are accepted during Zoolights, and people are encouraged to donate non-perishable food items.

There also are special events, such as Zoo Year's

Eve, featuring fireworks, entertainment, lights, and the famous traditional countdown just before midnight.

Tickets for Zoo Year's Eve must be pre-purchased. They are \$12 for general admission, which includes parking, and \$9 for children.

Regular admission is \$10 plus GST for adults, and \$7 for kids, with tickets available at the gate. Zoolights is open each night except Christmas Eve.



Photo by Patricia Riley



Photo by Patricia Riley



Photo by Patricia Riley

By Max Stephen

Hands up, everyone who has used 'password' as the password to an account on their computer?

No? How about '123456'? Or '12345678'?

Well, some of you have been. Those are three of the most common passwords employed by computer users to access their online accounts and software, according to Splash ID, a U.S. based Internet security firm.

People have been using these as default passwords either because they couldn't think of a unique way of protecting their information or simply couldn't be bothered to change an old password.

'Qwerty,' the first six letters on the top row of a computer keyboard, and 'abc123'

also made the top five most common passwords, Splash ID revealed in a news release.

Using passwords that are short combinations of simple words and numbers may be easier to remember than a lengthy complicated password.

But such simple combinations also makes it easy for cyber criminals to gain access to important information stored on personal computers.

"Length is more important than silly characters," says Tim Williams, an ICT instructor at SAIT Polytechnic.

Identity theft is a huge problem across the world that can devastate a person's credit score and quality of life.

Some people figure they are being clever when they substitute the "O" in "password" for a zero so it looks like 'passw0rd.'

But the truth is that this is one of the first combinations a cyber criminal would try to use.

Computers can create passwords at an astounding rate of speed and will be far more successful at substituting O's and zeros when trying to access your info.

This makes symbols as a way of protection almost obsolete, so you are by far better off having a longer password that is easy to remember.

"I used to use password as my password but then I got more crafty," says Karie Whitmer in an interview at the Odyssey cafe

If you have any of these as your current password, you should be seriously brainstorming a new and unique password to protect your information.

## the top 25 most commonly used PASSWORDS

dragon 1234567 superman trustno1  
 passw0rd qwerty shadow sunshine  
 bailey michael 111111 ashley monkey  
 master 654321 letmein password  
 loveyou 123456 qazwsx shadow  
 123123 football abc123 12345678