

Studded Tires

Safety

Studded tires are excellent Rock Polishers

Roads become slicker – especially noticeable on concrete. When traffic is stopped, you can examine the polished surface. It is remarkably smooth in the damaged areas. Damage to new concrete is especially galling – concrete roads could otherwise last several decades without a need for repair.

Ruts can cause some vehicles, including large trucks, to oscillate back and forth / personal experience - Nissan Altima

Hydroplaning / personal experience in the Columbia River Gorge. Roads are designed to drain water away, but that is defeated when water remains in rutted channels

Road Repair –impacts both road crews and traffic. Highway repair work zones puts actual lives in danger.

All of these negative safety issues impact all cars all of the time. Compare that to the benefit of studded tires that increase the safety margin in a narrow and rare set of circumstances, and for a small minority of vehicles. The negative impact far outweighs the positive.

Alternatives

Studless Snow Tires / personal experience. These tires are as good as or BETTER than studs in most winter conditions. I love the tires – they have unbelievable traction on snow, and even on ice.

I have used the same set of studless snow tires since the 2005-2006 season. I have driven them over 27000 miles and expect to use them two more seasons (for a total of about 35,000 miles on a Subaru Outback).

Fairness

Maybe 10%-15% of vehicles – I'd say less than 10% of vehicles in my neighborhood use studs. (It's easy to hear them coming) But the rest of us pay dearly: for road maintenance necessitated by that 10%, as well as having to contend with less safe and sometimes even dangerous road conditions that are a direct result of that small minority's use of studded tires.

Studless Snow Tires have been available for many years now. The damage studs create has been apparent for much longer. It is past time to solve this problem. This is an opportunity for to demonstrate that representative democracy and the legislative process can solve nuanced problems better than the initiative process.

My preference is that studded tires be rare or non-existent in Oregon. Those who use studded tires should pay for a substantial portion of the damage they cause, not a token amount such as \$10 at purchase. An annual 'pass' such as is required to use snow parks in the mountains might work well. Buy and display an annual sticker, or pay a hefty fine. Double the cost of that pass (and the fine) four years hence. Studded tire use will fade away, tire dealers will be happy selling studless snow tires, road damage from studs will become trivial, substantial financial savings will accrue, and overall safety will be much improved.

George Adkins, Salem, OR