

PRODUCTS YOU HELP TO MAKE

Rubber Preparation Begins Tire-Building

Many are the steps that go into the making of products at Firestone. To give the customer quality goods such as Firestone tires, well-trained men and women originate the tire designs, control the methods by which the tires are made, and carefully perform every step in the manufacturing process.

Since tires are built in company factories usually far removed from the fabrics plants, the textile worker is not ordinarily familiar with procedures in the building of the tire itself. Yet, he is interested in knowing something of what goes into making of the "end product" which he helps to provide for the customer.

This series of articles will attempt to show the major operations in tire building from the first preparation of raw rubber stock through the inspection, warehouse storage, and shipping of the finished product.

Before a tire can be built, a number of exacting operations and processes must be attended to. The building actually starts

in the rubber-preparation department. There, a bale server, following laboratory specifications, removes from storage bales of the proper types of natural and synthetic rubber, and earmarks it for the tire to be built.

AMONG the important early steps is careful identification. Depending on the type of tire, certain grades of natural and synthetic rubber must be blended to meet specific requirements. The bale server makes the first of several checks to insure that the proper rubber has been selected, and that the natural rubber is free of any foreign material. Any contamination in the rubber could ruin a batch. Or, what could be worse, it would result in an inferior product.

From the bale server, the rubber moves to a bale-splitter machine. Here it is cut into small pieces. During this step the operator makes another check for any possible contamination, and again sees that the rubber meets every standard.

After different kinds of rubber are blended they are conveyed to a plasticator, a machine that works somewhat like a meat grinder. It softens the raw rubber so it will mix readily with the required pigments, and have the specified plasticity—or softness.

AN OPERATOR of the plasticator keeps a watch on his machine to see that the rubber passes through in an even flow and that proper temperatures are maintained. As rubber is forced out of the machine, the operator controls the application of proper amounts of lubricants, so that the stock will not stick during further processing.

Temperature is very important in maintaining high quality in rubber that goes into tires. Here again, the operator checks to make sure he has proper blends of rubber to meet laboratory specifications.

Required plasticity varies with the use for which the rubber is intended—treads, sidewalls, plies or beads. Some compounds require that the rubber pass through the plasticator as many as three times.

As rubber emerges from the plasticator, it is hung in slabs on a cooling conveyor. After cooling, the rubber is sent on another trip through the plasticator, when specified. Then it is loaded onto skids to await the next step: Compounding.

Quality workmanship starts with the materials and in the preparation of those materials. It proceeds through every step of the manufacturing operation until it emerges a finished product upholding the company slogan: "Best Today, Still Better Tomorrow."

Next in series: Compounding.



ADVENTURE IN LEARNING

Miss Marie Moore is representative of the many Firestone employees' sons and daughters who are back at their work in colleges and universities this year. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Moore, Marie is in her third year at the Greensboro Woman's College of the University of North Carolina. The 1955 graduate of Gastonia's Ashley High School hopes to work as a research chemist in the oil refining industry. Her father is employed in the plant mechanical department.

Sales Make Jobs

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has naturally led to curtailed production and reduction in the number of jobs the company has available.

The company is determined to do everything in its power to change this trend. It is vital that every man and woman who works at Firestone support the "buy-sell" program to the limit. It will help safeguard your

job, help to bring back fellow workers laid off recently.

On the "Sales-Make-Jobs" campaign, J. A. Meek, vice president of production, commented:

"Our people have always been good sales persons for the quality products they help to produce. In these times it is most important that they spare no effort in this program to increase sales which, in turn, mean more jobs and more workers."

Bathroom, Kitchen Breed Accidents

Most home fires start in the bedroom or the kitchen, the National Board of Fire Underwriters says. That makes the following fire safety precautions especially important:

::: Never smoke in bed. You might fall asleep, drop your cigarette. Toxic gases from the fire that might result could render you unconscious before the heat awakened you.

::: Don't string electric extension cords around the room. Never run cords under rugs or over nails where they will wear, causing short circuits and possible fire.

::: If you use a portable oil or gas heater, be sure there is fresh air in the room and turn it off before going to bed. Many people are suffocated every year because they used unvented oil or gas heaters in tightly-closed rooms.

::: Place portable heaters where they won't be tipped easily, overturned or tripped on.

::: Do not use lighted matches to search dark closets. A flashlight is safe.

Some Firestone Families Have 'Week-End' River Houses

The more than a dozen employee-family river houses and week-end retreats a few minutes' drive from Gastonia are shining examples of the do-it-yourself art. Firestone people have put their resourcefulness and willing hands to work on the South Fork River, the Catawba, Mill Creek, and other waterways in the area. The result: Nature hideaways ranging from practical, one-room over-

night shelters to more elaborate cabins boasting "all the comforts of home."

There are some things common to them all. These places stick close to the water's edge, and they provide a welcome retreat from the busy life the owners lead.

Of the several employee river houses, Furman Pearson's and Charlie Plyler's are typical examples.

Mr. Pearson, a Shop millwright, has a cabin on the South Fork River a little way above where the water empties into the Catawba. On a spacious acreage leased from a power company, he has constructed a building of three rooms and a back porch on the main floor; and a shower and a workshop

area underneath. The workshop opens toward a broad pier and the connecting boathouse of concrete blocks, now nearing completion.

MOST of the work the owner has done himself, using many odds-and-ends of material. The "extra touches" include a high-arch fireplace, kitchen built-ins, and a masonry-enclosed water supply equipped with an electric pump, and the landscaping, with generous use of native shrubs and flowers.

Furman, a well-known beekeeper at 1300 Jackson road, Gastonia, plans to move all his honeybees to the river later on.

In recent months Wade Ledwell, a machine oiler at the plant, has helped out with build-

ing and improvements around the place. He likes to be called the "official pilot" of the sleek motorboat—standard equipment for a river hideaway.

The Plyler cabin is on Mill Creek in York County, S. C. Mr. Plyler, an overhauler in SYCO Weaving, and Mrs. Plyler, a re-spooler in Twisting, live at 108 South Dalton street, Gastonia. The story of their river cabin set deep in a forest includes the many contributions of their son-in-law, Woodrow Wooten of the Quality Control laboratory here.

A FAMILY project, the building was started early this spring. As a result of careful planning and hard work in spare time, it was ready for use by the middle of summer. On land leased from an individual owner, the cabin sports a wide screened viewing porch, a kitchen and a "living" area.

"We haven't been concerned too much with 'fancying it up' so far, because most of our time here is spent on the river," the owners confess.

From "The Point" near the cabin, the Plylers, the Wootens and other relatives like especially to fish and ride their outboard. And some of them couldn't do without their water skis.

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Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Plyler improvise the comforts of home in their Mill Creek week-end house near Bethel Gin in South Carolina. Their woodland retreat is a family-roundup place from spring through autumn.

