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Blue Angel with new requirements of tyres Improved braking performance on wet roads, fuel-saving and quieter

The newly launched Blue Angel for low-noise and fuel-saving tyres has set new and ambitious standards relating to environment, health and economy that are orientated towards the caps that will apply across the EU as of 2012. The criteria for award of the Blue Angel make high demands of tyres: they must be low-noise and use little fuel, and this will ease the load on car drivers' purses as well. Moreover, the tyres awarded the Blue Angel must ensure that the vehicle comes to a quick standstill when braking on wet roads. Health protection also plays a key role, for dust is created from the wear on tires through acceleration, driving, and braking. The design of the tyres must be such that they minimise the harmful effects of wear. In addition, tyre wear should contain as few substances harmful to health as possible, that is, substances such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) which can cause cancer in large concentrations. Finally, there is the advantage that a tyre with little wear has a longer life.

As of 2012 there will be new legal standards in Europe as concerns rolling resistance, braking performance on wet roads and stricter caps on rolling noise. The Blue Angel is one step ahead of this and goes beyond compliance, for any potential bearers of the eco-label must demonstrate an average 20 percent lower rolling resistance and 25 percent better wet grip performance than the new limit values set for the EU as of 2012. In addition, the rolling noise of Blue Angel tyres of any width may not be more than 70 decibels (dB(A)).

"The new EU limits for rolling resistance in passenger car tyres are not as ambitious. The Blue Angel sets a higher standard", says Dr. Thomas Holzmann, Vice President of the Federal Environment Agency (UBA). "This difference can easily add up to 5 percent less fuel consumption. In monetary terms, the average car driver can count on saving roughly 50 euros in fuel expenses per year, or about 250 euros for the lifetime of a tyre", said Holzmann.

Environmentally friendly, safe and economic tyres that meet all these requirements are already for sale. The only problem is that they are often hard to recognise, which is why the Blue Angel is intended to give consumers a helping hand. "I hope that tyre manufacturers will focus more on protection of health and the environment", adds the UBA's Vice President.

Tyre manufacturers that would like to apply the eco-label for low-noise and fuel-saving tyres may submit an application with the RAL - German Institute for Quality Assurance and Certification.

Application information is available here: <http://www.ral-umwelt.de/index.php?id=244>.
For more information about the Blue Angel go to <http://www.blauer-engel.de>.

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