

SERVICE TIP

Checking Your Tires? Check Your Gauges First

Did you ever wonder if tire gauges are accurate indefinitely? I for one never gave it much thought, until recently. Think about it; I'm sure that each and every one of you has more than one tire gauge in your facility. I have three different gauges in use. One is the most popular, inline, glass-encased, high-pressure variety, used mostly to check tire pressures requiring 15-65 psi. The second gauge I have is the pocket-style, spring-loaded 20-60 psi gauge. The third and most critical gauge is the 0-20 psi gauge that measures in half-pound increments.

I was curious about the way my own passenger vehicle tires measured when they appeared low. I proceeded to check them with the two proper gauges I have in the shop. I expected to be satisfied with the readings indicated. Both showed the tires to be within 2 psi difference. This is not a very critical difference as long as you are using the same gauge to check all the tires on the vehicle. I proceeded to check the tire pressures again using a similar gauge that I brought from home.

To my surprise, I found the pressures on all four tires to be 5 psi lower than indicated by the other two gauges from the shop. At this point, my curiosity was piqued. I went out, purchased new tire gauges and rechecked the same tires. I found the same difference, each tire about 5 psi shy of being the desired pressure, between the readings measured by the old gauges and the new.

I really took for granted the life of these gauges. The low pressure requirements of the various turf equipment, where tire pressures range from 8 to 10 psi, is very critical for proper operation. The gauge I had been using turned out to be reading almost 3 psi lower than the new gauge purchased. For the minimal cost to replace all three gauges, I feel a lot more confident about the condition of the equipment's tires. The after-cut appearance on greens can be affected, not to mention the life of the tires . . . I've been lucky not to have a Sandpro tire unseat off its rim while in a bunker.

The next time you're checking tire pressures on your equipment, try using a different tire gauge and see if you could have a problem.



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