

NEWS RELEASE



YOKOHAMA



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For immediate release

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Yokohama Rubber to Expand Production Capacity by 50% in Tires for Construction and Mining Equipment

Tokyo—The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd., announced today that it will expand its production capacity for off-the-road tires for construction, mining, and other heavy equipment by about 50%. The company will build a new facility at its Onomichi Plant to provide the additional capacity. Work will begin on the new facility this month, and Yokohama's plans call for production to get under way there in November. The project will increase Yokohama's monthly production capacity for off-the-road tires incrementally to 1,620 tons—as measured in rubber consumption—by 2009, from 1,100 tons today. Yokohama has earmarked ¥3.5 billion for the investment project.

The expansion by Yokohama is in response to surging, structural growth in global demand, notably in the mining sector. Demand outside Japan accounts for about 80% of Yokohama's business in off-the-road tires. Burgeoning demand for natural resources, especially in newly emerging economies, has occasioned unprecedented activity in resource-development projects. That has increased demand for radial tires for the heavy equipment used to extract resources in mines and to handle the ore at ports.

Yokohama's new production facility will supply 25-, 33-, and 35-inch radial tires. Those are medium-sized, general-purpose tires for construction and mining equipment, and they constitute the heart of the market in those sectors. They carry dump trucks, for example, of capacities from 30 tons to 75 tons.

Production of off-the-road bias tires will also continue at Yokohama, even as the company expands production of radials. Demand remains strong for bias tires for small and medium-sized vehicles in underground mining operations, in freight-handling equipment at ports, and in other applications. Customers especially value the cut- and wear-resistant performance of Yokohama's bias tires.

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