

ENVIRONMENT

Tire resolution gets pumped

*Winter requirement
could take some time*

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TRANSCONTINENTAL MEDIA—CORNER BROOK

A decision by Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) to lobby the government to make winter tires mandatory may not get any traction this winter.

In a slim vote of 109-102, the MNL membership voted in favour of the motion to lobby the government when it was brought to the floor of the organization's annual general meeting in Corner Brook this past weekend. However, the effort to change legislation could take time.

The motion was generated by the MNL's urban municipalities committee, based on discussions the committee has had with members, and was brought forward by committee chairman Keith Keating, a town councillor from Marystown.

Essentially, the argument is that using winter tires is safer than driving on all-season tires during this province's tough winter climate. Quebec recently made snow tire usage mandatory, and other provinces are pondering similar legislation.

If the lobby effort were to be successful, as per the MNL resolution, winter tires would be required from November until April.

"There was a lot of conversation both for it and against it," said Deer Lake Coun. Larry Hall, the MNL's outgoing western regional director.

"Several people were asking why they need to go out and buy winter tires if they aren't driving very much. I think some people are just resistant to change, but common sense prevailed in the end and the membership supported the motion."

However, applying pressure on the government based on resolutions passed at an annual general meeting often waits until special meetings between MNL members and the provincial government.

Last year, meetings during which the MNL would present its resolutions to the appropriate cabinet minister didn't happen until the spring sitting of the House of Assembly.

"I doubt the lobbying effort will be effective for this winter," Hall said. "We're probably looking at next winter before anything might come into effect (because of MNL's lobbying effort)."