

NEWS RELEASE



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Yokohama Rubber to Establish U.S. Tire R&D Center in North Carolina

Tokyo – The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd. announced today that it will establish a tire research & development center in North Carolina, with R&D activities scheduled to start this September initially in the greater Charlotte area. The Company presently conducts R&D on tires for the North American market in several U.S. states and in Japan, but looks to consolidate the majority of these R&D activities at the new center soon. The consolidation of R&D activities will strengthen the Company's R&D framework and further accelerate its ability to deliver new tire products that meet market needs in a timely manner. With the consolidation, Yokohama also plans to double the current size of its North American R&D staff.

The new center initially will engage in the design of new tires for passenger cars and other consumer applications, but will gradually expand its activities to include testing & evaluation, design of tires for industrial and construction machinery, technical services and quality assurance. The North Carolina location was selected on the basis of its ability to attract high-quality staff and its close proximity to a hub airport. Yokohama Rubber will consider additional investment in its facilities in line with the expansion of the breadth of its activities.

Yokohama Rubber's North American operations currently include the sale of tires for passenger cars, trucks and buses, and industrial and construction machinery, with tire manufacturing facilities in Virginia and Mississippi and its corporate headquarters in California. During Phase IV (2015–2017) of its Grand Design 100 (GD100) medium-term management plan, Yokohama Rubber is placing even greater importance on the huge North American market and plans to strengthen local sales of original equipment tires and replacement tires. Consolidation of its R&D function in North America is an important part of that management strategy.

A strong proponent of local production for local consumption, Yokohama Rubber also has been strengthening its tire R&D activities in regional centers close to the markets it serves. The Company established its Nürburgring Test Center in Germany in 2006, its Tire Test Center of Asia in Thailand in April 2009, and the Yokohama China Technical Center in China in January 2012. The new tire R&D center in the United States will become the Company's largest overseas R&D center in terms of both functions and number of employees.