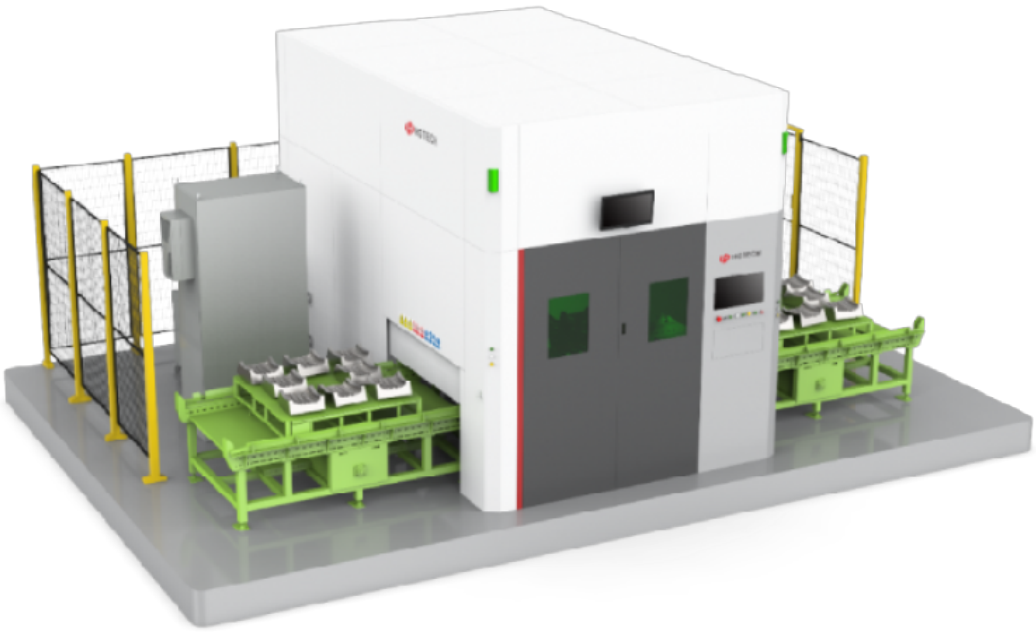
Automated Laser Tire Mold Cleaning Solutions: HGTECH vs Traditional Methods in Green Manufacturing



Wuhan, Hubei Mar 24, 2026 (Issuewire.com) - Advancing Green Manufacturing

In the contemporary landscape of global manufacturing, the shift toward sustainability is no longer a peripheral corporate social responsibility goal but a core operational imperative. As the automotive industry accelerates its transition toward carbon neutrality, tire manufacturers are under unprecedented pressure to align with stringent ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) standards. One of the most critical yet traditionally problematic phases in tire production is mold maintenance. To address these challenges, HGTECH(Wuhan HGLaser Engineering Co.,Ltd), a pioneer in laser industrial applications and the core subsidiary of HGTECH, has developed cutting-edge Automated & Robotic Laser Tire Mold Cleaning Solutions. These systems represent a pivotal technological leap, leveraging high-precision fiber lasers integrated with multi-axis robotic arms to remove vulcanized rubber residues and release agents without compromising the integrity of the mold substrate. By replacing manual, abrasive, or chemical-heavy processes, HGTECH's automated laser cleaning is redefining the benchmarks for efficiency and ecological compliance in the "Smart Factory" era.

The Hidden Costs and Limitations of Traditional Cleaning Methods

For decades, the tire industry has relied on three primary methods for mold maintenance: chemical cleaning, dry ice blasting, and sandblasting. While these methods served their purpose in an era of lower automation, they have increasingly become "hidden shackles" that impede modern production flow and sustainability targets.

Chemical cleaning involves immersing molds in concentrated acid or alkaline baths. While effective at dissolving residues, it poses significant risks to worker health and necessitates complex wastewater treatment systems to manage hazardous runoff. Furthermore, repeated exposure to corrosive chemicals can lead to micro-pitting on mold surfaces, eventually degrading the quality of the tire finish.

Dry ice and sandblasting, though physically effective, carry high operational burdens. Dry ice blasting requires a continuous and expensive supply of CO2 pellets, while the extreme noise levels generated during the process necessitate specialized acoustic environments. Sandblasting, on the other hand, is inherently abrasive. Over time, it wears down the fine textures and sharp edges of the mold—such as the sipes and lettering—shortening the mold's functional lifespan and increasing the frequency of expensive replacements. Perhaps most critically, these traditional methods are labor-intensive and difficult to synchronize with 24/7 automated production lines, creating bottlenecks that limit overall factory throughput.

Core Technological Advantages of HGTECH Laser Solutions

As a pioneer and leader in laser industrial applications in China — HGTECH has engineered laser cleaning solutions that transition mold maintenance from a "necessary evil" to a high-tech asset. Their systems are built upon four technological pillars that distinguish them from conventional alternatives.

- **Precision without Damage**

The fundamental advantage of laser cleaning lies in its non-contact, selective photothermal mechanism. The laser beam energy is absorbed by the contamination layer on the mold surface, forming a rapidly expanding plasma that generates shock waves, causing pollutants to vaporize or peel off instantaneously. With correct laser parameters and optimal wavelength, the base material will not be damaged or melted. This selective action ensures that vulcanized rubber residues and release agents are removed while the metallic mold substrate remains physically untouched — a capability that fundamentally protects the fine textures, sipes, and lettering of increasingly complex modern mold designs.

- **Robotic & Intelligent Integration — Overcoming Real-World Complexity**

Modern tire mold cleaning presents three core engineering challenges that HGTECH's DALLEN Series has been specifically designed to address: compatibility with diverse vulcanizing machine layouts and mold sizes; laser accessibility across complex cavity geometries with uneven bevel depths and narrow crown-to-shoulder gaps; and system stability under high-temperature operating conditions, where mold surface temperatures exceed 170°C and thermal radiation in the surrounding space reaches above 130°C.

To overcome these challenges, HGTECH's online cleaning system employs a self-developed vision-guided trajectory algorithm that actively acquires cavity contour information and plans cleaning paths automatically, with preview and anti-collision functions. A self-developed multi-axis flexible optical path laser cleaning head ensures full coverage of complex all-steel mold cavities, guaranteeing "No Rust Hidden" cleaning results. The system operates on an electric moving platform (IP54 protection standard) and is equipped with dual-redundancy obstacle detection using both ultrasonic and laser radar, enabling safe navigation across active production floors.

- **Carbon Neutrality and Eco-friendliness**

In the context of Green Manufacturing, laser cleaning operates with a "zero-consumable" profile. Unlike sandblasting — which requires plastic or glass particles (approx. 70kg per cycle) — or dry ice cleaning — which consumes approximately 30kg of dry ice per cycle while generating noise pollution and risk of personal burns — the laser system requires only electricity to operate (full load power consumption of 21kW for the online unit; 15kW for the offline unit). There are no chemical reagents, no blast media, and no secondary waste streams. Vaporized residues are managed by an integrated smoke management system. This creates a low-noise, emission-free workspace fully aligned with Industry 4.0 environmental standards.

- **Flexible Product Line — Online and Offline Solutions**

HGTECH offers the DALLEN Series in both online and offline configurations to suit different factory requirements. For straightforward integration needs, the DALLEN ONLINE unit enables in-situ cleaning directly on the vulcanizing machine without mold removal, eliminating accuracy degradation caused by repeated disassembly.

The DALLEN OFFLINE unit — a fully enclosed, fully automated double-station system engineered to handle the most demanding mold cleaning scenarios. Featuring automatic measurement of sideplate and tread block specifications and automatic cleaning path planning, it delivers comprehensive coverage across all mold types: all-steel and semi-steel pattern blocks, as well as upper and lower side panels. Its capabilities extend to the most challenging applications, including snow tire molds characterized by deep grooves and extremely fine surface patterns. Cleaning efficiency reaches approximately 45±5 minutes for all-steel molds and 25±5 minutes for semi-steel molds. Built on a self-developed laser cleaning process expert library and proprietary software with online/offline programming capability, the system ensures consistent, repeatable results across every cleaning cycle. All products meet CE standards and comply with relevant Chinese national machinery safety standards (GB/T series).

Head-to-Head Comparison: Efficiency and ROI

The efficiency advantage of laser cleaning becomes immediately apparent when comparing cleaning cycles. For two all-steel molds, sandblasting requires approximately 8 hours in total (3 hours dismounting + 2 hours washing + 3 hours preheating) and a three-person team, while dry ice cleaning takes approximately 2.5 hours with one operator. HGTECH's DALLEN Series completes the same task in approximately 45±5 minutes for all-steel molds and 25±5 minutes for semi-steel molds, fully automatically, with no mold removal required.

On consumables, sandblasting consumes approximately 70kg of plastic or glass particles per cycle and dry ice cleaning approximately 30kg of dry ice — both representing significant recurring costs. The laser system eliminates consumable expenditure entirely, operating solely on electricity (21kW for the online unit; 15kW for the offline unit). The elimination of consumable costs, combined with reduced labor requirements and the complete removal of mold disassembly procedures, delivers a compelling total cost of ownership advantage that compounds significantly over the operational lifetime of the equipment.

From an environmental compliance standpoint, sandblasting generates dust pollution while dry ice cleaning risks noise pollution and personal burns. Laser cleaning produces none of these, with vaporized residues captured by an integrated smoke management system — meeting both Industry 4.0 standards and international CE certification requirements.

Industry Applications and Strategic Value

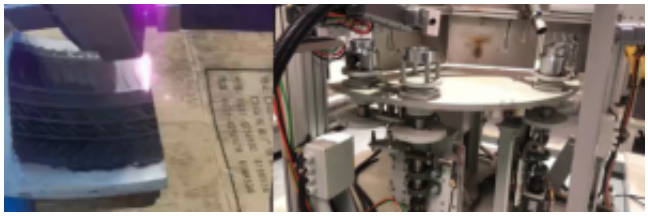
The versatility of HGTECH’s laser cleaning technology allows it to be adapted for a wide range of products, from high-performance passenger car tires to heavy-duty all-steel radial truck tires. Each of these segments has unique mold requirements—high-performance molds often feature intricate siping that is easily damaged by traditional cleaning, while truck tire molds are large and cumbersome to handle manually.

By integrating automated laser cleaning, tire manufacturers are effectively moving the cleaning process from the "back-end" of the factory into the heart of the intelligent manufacturing chain. This integration allows for predictive maintenance schedules where molds are cleaned based on actual usage data rather than arbitrary timelines, further optimizing the production heartbeat.

Conclusion

The evolution of tire manufacturing toward a "zero-pollution, high-efficiency" model is inevitable. Automated & Robotic Laser Tire Mold Cleaning Solutions, as championed by HGTECH, provide the necessary bridge between traditional industrial power and the requirements of the green, digital age. By solving the long-standing pain points of mold damage, environmental waste, and labor dependency, this technology empowers manufacturers to achieve a rare synergy: enhancing environmental sustainability while simultaneously driving down operational costs. As the industry moves forward, those who adopt these intelligent, light-based solutions will find themselves at a distinct competitive advantage in the global market.

For more information on intelligent laser solutions and technical specifications, please visit the official website: https://www.hglaserglobal.com/



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