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PRESS RELEASE

Polycarbonate: driving the automotive industry to new success.

It's a fact that up to 75% of fuel consumption is related to vehicle weight. So it's no surprise that car designers – always looking at ways to improve their vehicles – place a major emphasis on reducing this weight as much as possible. That's why, more and more, they're turning to polycarbonate as an alternative for metal and glass.

Far lighter, but still just as strong, this plastic plays a key role in increasing fuel economy and decreasing CO2 emissions. And when you consider that lighter cars are easier to brake and have a reduced collision impact, it results in a better, safer driving experience – and positions polycarbonate as the growing force in the automotive industry today.

To those who work with it though, this is not new news. Over the past 30 years the use of polycarbonate in automotive applications has increased significantly and only the extruded sheet industry has a higher rate of consumption.

A typical vehicle incorporates 10 kilograms of polycarbonate in various forms. This includes injection moulded polycarbonate used in headlights and displaced glass, a form of blends with ABS and PBT polymers used in interior and under-the-bonnet applications, and polycarbonate in a PC/

ABS blend providing advantages in dimensional stability, scratch resistance and overall aesthetics.

Polycarbonate is also the choice for many sunroofs, and small window panes used in vehicles with 'all-round' glazing. And it is windows and windscreens in particular that offer the opportunity for further growth. Leading producers of polycarbonate materials have invested heavily in development for this over the past decade, using special coatings to achieve the high scratch-resistance longevity normally associated with glass. Now the wait is for the automotive industry to conclude their years of extensive testing.

Even without becoming the material of choice in vehicle windows, the outlook for polycarbonate is strong. Growth of up to 5% per year is expected due to increased vehicle sales, and, of course, increased polycarbonate being used in each one.

LINK: <http://www.epse.org/polycarbonate-driving-the-automotive-industry-to-new-success/>

EPSE is a sector group of the European Plastics Converters and represents the 11 major polycarbonate sheet producers manufacturing over 120 000 tonnes of polycarbonate sheets every year, as well as 3 resin producers. EPSE comprises more than 1 000 employees and generates a turnover of over 500 million € per year.

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