



AUTOEPCON

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

SOCIETY OF PLASTICS ENGINEERS
Detroit Section and Automotive Division



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SPE[®] AUTOEPCON HIGHLIGHTS INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES TO ADD VALUE, REDUCE COST IN AUTOMOTIVE APPLICATIONS

TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – The **SPE[®] Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference (AutoEPCON)**, organized by the Detroit Section and Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE[®]) International, returns for its fifth year on April 27, 2010 for a full day of technical presentations, keynote addresses, exhibits, and a networking reception at day's end. Despite several years of severe cutbacks in both the automotive and plastics industries, this year's show is full of presentations on new technologies to help automakers add value and reduce cost and weight of components with engineering plastics.

This year's conference will feature four keynote speakers who will help frame both the challenges and opportunities facing the supply community as well as automakers as this industry struggles to emerge from the record downturns of the past few years. Right after opening remarks by 2010 **SPE AutoEPCON** event chair, Nippani Rao, Dale Gerard, Ph.D., senior manager-North American Materials, General Motors Corp., will speak about "*New Developments at the New GM: Plastics & More.*" He will be followed by Volker Warzelhan, Ph.D., senior vice-president, Polymer Research-Thermoplastics at BASF SE, who will give a talk entitled "*Innovation Pipeline – Engineering Plastics.*" Before lunch, Vivek Jain, Ph.D., global R&D director, Ticona Engineering Polymers, will give a presentation entitled "*Driving Innovations in the Automotive Industry.*" Following lunch (which is sponsored by Ticona), Koen Devits, business unit director, DSM Engineering Plastics-Americas will discuss "*Innovative Sustainable Solutions Utilizing Engineering Plastics.*"

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The 16-presentation technical program will feature two parallel technical tracks morning and afternoon and a surprising number of the talks will highlight new materials and process technologies. DuPont Automotive will describe a new nylon said to double the service life of powertrain components and a second talk on the uses of laser welding for creative and cost-effective solutions. A speaker from Flynn Burner Corp. will explain why flame plasma surface treatments (to increase adhesion to polymer surfaces) are both commercially viability and a green alternative to conventional treatments like primers. Chevron Phillips will introduce new polyphenylene sulfide (PPS) compounds specifically formulated for battery coolant-system applications, while Bayer MaterialScience will describe an innovative new direct coating/skinning process to produce high-quality decorative surfaces in a single shot, and a BASF presenter will give a talk on the use of silicone adhesives as a sealant for thermoplastic engine components. Presentations from Ticona Engineering Polymers will cover innovative PPS blow-molded air ducts for turbocharged diesel engines, new liquid crystal polymers (LCPs) to facilitate further miniaturization of automotive electronics; copolymer polyoxymethylene (POM, acetate) for high-strength, high-impact applications; long-fiber thermoplastics for weight and cost reduction on vehicle interiors; reduction of volatile-organic compounds (VOCs) on vehicle interiors for sustainability and passenger comfort; and new materials developed to meet the challenges of hybrid/electric vehicles. DSM Engineering Plastics will have two talks: the first on the use of high-performance engineering plastics for challenging auto applications; and the second on a new tube concept to boost chemical and mechanical performance. Additionally, a speaker from Matereality LLC will explain how new materials databases enable modeling for diverse computer-aided engineering (CAE) applications.

“Given the tremendous difficulties our industry has experienced in the last two years,” said Dr. Norm Kakarala, senior technical fellow, Inteva Products LLC, “it’s really remarkable that we’re seeing this level of innovation so early in the recovery process. Clearly, the supply community has responded to automakers’ need to take cost and weight out by developing more efficient materials and processes that add value to components.” Kakarala founded the **AutoEPCON** show and serves as its 2010 technical program chair.

Speaking about the 2010 show, Nippani Rao, who retired from Chrysler LLC last year and is now president of Rao & Assoc. as well as this year’s event chair, said “At a time of great change in the automotive industry, **SPE’s AutoEPCON** remains an excellent resource for keeping up-to-date on breaking innovations in engineering plastics. These high-performance materials keep making new inroads in thermally and chemically aggressive environments under the hood, in semi-structural applications in chassis/powertrain, and by meeting increasingly demanding aesthetic and cost challenges on vehicle interiors. Our 2010 program will provide an excellent overview to the latest developments in these versatile materials for anyone working in design, engineering, manufacturing, or purchasing for ground transportation.”

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The 2010 **AutoEPCON** show will be held April 27 at the MSU Management Education Center (www.mectroy.com) in Troy, Mich. in the Detroit suburbs, and will focus on *Design, Materials, Processing, & Use of Engineering Plastics for the Global Automotive Industry*. Current sponsors include Ticona Engineering Polymers, DSM Engineering Plastics, AsahiKasei Plastics North America, BASF, JSP, Chevron Phillips Chemical Co., DuPont Automotive, Adell Plastics Inc., Entec Polymers LLC, DatapointLabs, ANSYS, *Automotive Newswire* magazine, *Automotive Engineering International* magazine, *Ward's AutoWorld* magazine, *Plastics Technology* magazine, *Automotive Design & Production* magazine, and *Plastics Engineering* magazine.

The Detroit Section and the Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE®) International have developed a one-day technical conference and exhibition specifically focused on engineering plastics for the automotive industry. First held in 2006, **AutoEPCON** features technical presentations on the newest advances in materials technology, predictive engineering, process enhancements, and application developments for thermoplastic and thermoset engineering plastics for the automotive industry. Exhibits are also on display throughout the event. The registration fee includes the Conference Program Book, which contains abstracts of the presentations, as well as lunch, refreshments, and a reception, which provides further networking opportunities for all who attend. In addition, this one-day multi-session conference includes four keynote addresses from industry leaders.

The mission of SPE International is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. SPE's Detroit Section is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments for all phases of plastics and plastic based-composite developments – particularly in the automotive industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more information about the **SPE Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference**, to view the conference's program, or to register for the event, please visit <http://speautomotive.com/emc>, or contact the group at +1.248.244.8993, or write SPE, 1800 Crooks Road, Suite A, Troy, MI 48084, USA.

For more information on the Society of Plastics Engineers International or other SPE events, visit the SPE website at www.4spe.org, or call +1.203.775.0471.

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TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – At the fifth-annual **SPE® Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference (AutoEPCON)** on April 27, 2010 Dale Gerard, Ph.D., senior manager-North American Materials Engineering, Corrosion Engineering, Fluids Engineering and Laboratories at General Motors Corp., will give the opening keynote on “*New Developments at the New GM: Plastics & More.*” In his current position, Gerard is the global leader for GM Materials Engineering as well as overseeing nine engineering laboratories and being responsible for all GM Materials Engineering activities in North America. Previously, he was senior manager-GM Powertrain Materials Engineering from 2004 until he assumed his current position in 2009. Gerard’s career at GM spans 22 years. He has held positions in Advanced Materials Engineering, Manufacturing, and Manufacturing Engineering, as well as serving as an engineering group manager for several GM Powertrain computer-aided engineering departments. Additionally, he is a recipient of the *GM Chairman’s Honors* award for his contribution to the development of synthetic-blend automatic transmission fluid. Gerard holds bachelors and masters degrees in Metallurgical Engineering from Michigan Technology University and a doctorate in Materials Science from Penn State University.

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TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – Volker Warzelhan, Ph.D., senior vice-president, Polymer Research-Thermoplastics at BASF SE will give the second morning keynote address at this year’s ***SPE® Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference (AutoEPCON)*** on the topic of “*Innovation Pipeline – Engineering Plastics.*” In his current position, which he has held since 2003, Warzelhan is responsible for global research in thermoplastic materials and also represents the research function on the global automotive steering committee at BASF. He previously was group vice-president Styrenics for BASF’s Asia/Pacific regional business unit headquartered in Singapore. During his term there, he became a lecturer at the German Institute of Science & Technology at the National University of Singapore. Warzelhan began his career at BASF’s plastics research laboratory in Ludwigshafen, Germany in 1978. After working his way through a number of positions in strategic planning and finance, Warzelhan became vice-president Research-Advanced Composites and later Engineering Plastics. He holds a doctorate in Physical Polymer Chemistry from University of Mainz in Germany and did a post-doctorate fellowship at the Pierre et Marie Curie University in Paris. He is also an honorary professor at the University of Marburg, Germany.

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TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – The pre-luncheon keynote for the 2010 **SPE® Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference (AutoEPCON)** will be given by Vivek Jain, Ph.D., global R&D director, Ticona Engineering Polymers, who will discuss “*Driving Innovations in the Automotive Industry.*” In his current position, Jain oversees a global R&D team of 150 people and has responsibility for driving innovation and commercialization of new products and applications at Ticona. Previously, he worked for General Electric Co. (GE) for 11 years in a variety of positions, the last of which was global technology leader for GE Water & Process Technologies. Before that, Jain was a senior scientist at Occidental Chemicals Corp. focused on product development and manufacturing support for the organization’s global petrochemical and specialty-chemicals business. He holds a doctorate in Chemistry from Southern Illinois University and an MBA degree in Finance from St. Bonaventure University.

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TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – Koen Devits, business unit director, DSM Engineering Plastics – Americas will give the fourth and final keynote at the fifth-annual **SPE® Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference (AutoEPCON)**. The talk, entitled “*Innovative Sustainable Solutions Utilizing Engineering Plastics*,” will begin following lunch. Devits has held his current position since December 2005, and was previously director, corporate e-Business at the company from 2003-2005. Prior to joining DSM, Devits was director, global e-Business for the fasteners segment of Textron, Inc., where he rolled out various cross-segment e-business projects throughout the supply chain – from suppliers to manufacturing to customers. Before joining Textron, Devits was the e-Business leader for GE Plastics Europe, helping move the company into a fully “e-Enabled” organization. Devits has also held various marketing and sales positions in the automotive industry for Delphi Corp.’s European operations. He holds a BBA degree in International Marketing & Business Affairs from the University of Antwerp and has completed an MBA degree with a specialization in International Business Management.

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