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SPE® AUTO TPO CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS ANNOUNCE 2012 EVENT DATES, ISSUE CALL FOR PAPERS & PRESENTATIONS

TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – The fourteenth-annual **SPE® TPO Automotive Engineered Polyolefins Conference**, the *world's leading automotive engineered-polyolefins forum* will be held **September 30-October 3, 2012** and the group has issued its annual call for papers with **abstracts** due **April 27, 2012** and non-commercial **papers or presentations** due **July 31, 2012** (eMail both to TPOpapers@auto-tpo.com). Since 1998, volunteers from the **Detroit Section** of the **Society of Plastics Engineers** (SPE®) have organized the conference to update attendees on the latest developments in engineered thermoplastic polyolefins (TPOs) and related materials. The show typically draws 500 attendees from around the world and features 40+ technical presentations, panel discussions, keynote speakers, networking receptions, plus exhibits that highlight advances in engineered polyolefin materials, processes, and applications technologies.

To represent the technology changes in the plastics industry during the last decade better, as well to reflect growing interest among the automotive and ground-transportation market segments, the conference has expanded its scope beyond rigid and elastomeric TPOs to include a growing range of thermoplastic elastomers (TPEs) and thermoplastic vulcanizates (TPVs) and that broader perspective is reflected in a slight name change for the event.

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Organizers Issue Call for Papers for Fourteenth-Annual SPE Auto TPO Conference
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Returning event co-chair, Jeffrey Valentage, market developer-Specialty Elastomers Business, ExxonMobil Chemical Co. says, “While the name has changed slightly over the last year, the Auto TPO Conference has the same elements that returning attendees value – quality technical presentations, interesting exhibits, lively panel discussions, timely keynote topics, and an atmosphere that makes networking easy and comfortable.”

The expanded conference scope is already being reflected in the event’s technical program, which is co-chaired by Dr. Norm Kakarala, Inteva Products LLC and Peter Grelle, Plastics Fundamentals Group LLC. Nine technical sessions are being organized around topics like **Surface Enhancements** (co-chaired by Dr. Rose Ryntz, International Automotive Components (IAC) and David Helmer, General Motors Corp.); **Advances in Automotive Polyolefins** (co-chaired by Patti Tibbenham, Ford Motor Co., and Neil Fuenmayor, LyondellBasell Industries); **Part Design, Tooling & Processing** (co-chaired by Dave Okonski and Charles Buehler, both of General Motors Co.); **Rigid Polyolefin Compounds** (co-chaired by Mike Balow, Asahi Kasei Plastics North America and Ermanno Ruccolo, Mitsui Plastics Inc.); **Understanding TPOs** (co-chaired by Hoa Pham, Washington Penn Plastics and Tom Traugott, Advanced Composites); **Automotive Interior Trim & Skins** (co-chaired by Bob Eller, Robert Eller Associates and Yvonne Bankowski, Ford Motor Co.); **Lightweight TPO Structural Applications** (co-chaired by Laura Soreide, Ford Motor Co. and Dr. Jay Raison, Adell Plastics); **Large Part Thermoforming** (co-chaired by Ed Bearse and Kurt Dubowski); and **Automotive TPEs** (co-chaired by Bob Eller and Jeffrey Valentage). The conference’s ever-popular **Executive Panel Discussion** will also return, moderated by Ron Price of Global Polymer Solutions.

This year’s conference returns to the Troy Marriott in the Detroit suburbs. A variety of sponsorship packages are available for companies interested in showcasing their products and / or services.

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About the TPO Conference

Since 1998, the ***SPE TPO Automotive Engineered Polyolefins Conference*** has highlighted the importance of rigid and flexible polyolefins throughout the automobile – in applications ranging from semi-structural composite underbody shields and front-end modules to soft-touch interior skins and bumper fascia. Engineered polyolefins have been the fastest-growing segment of the global plastics industry for more than a decade owing to their excellent cost / performance ratio. The show typically draws approximately 500 attendees from 20 countries on four continents who are interested in learning about the latest in rigid and elastomeric TPO as well as TPE and TPV technologies. Fully a third of conference attendees say they work for a transportation OEM, and roughly 20% work for a tier integrator / molder, with the balance from materials or reinforcement suppliers, equipment OEMs, industry consultants, and members of academia.

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 TPO Automotive Engineered Polyolefins Conference***, to view the conference's evolving technical program, or to register to attend the event, please visit <http://auto-tpo.com/> or <http://speautomotive.com/tpo.htm>, or contact the group at +1.248.244.8993, or write SPE Detroit Section, 1800 Crooks Road, Suite A, Troy, MI 48084, USA.

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

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