



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (22 Sept. 2015) SPE-TPO-3-2015

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17TH SPE® TPO AUTO. ENGINEERED POLYOLEFINS CONFERENCE SPORTS LARGEST TECHNICAL PROGRAM IN ITS HISTORY

TROY (DETROIT), MICH. – The seventeenth-annual *SPE® TPO Automotive Engineered Polyolefins Conference*, the world's leading automotive engineered polyolefins forum, will showcase the largest technical program in the event's history with over 70 presentations given in nine technical tracks during three concurrent sessions at the three-day event. The strong program, supported by a record number of sponsors and exhibitors and five dynamic keynote speakers, will help attendees learn more about technical advances on key issues facing the automotive plastics market for both rigid and flexible thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) materials, which are widely used on both interior and exterior applications for passenger vehicles and light trucks. Organized by the *Detroit Section* of the *Society of Plastics Engineers* (SPE), the 2015 technical conference and exhibition returns to the Troy Marriott in the Detroit suburbs from **October 4-7**.

"It's the technical program committee's mission to help our attendees become active participants in an ongoing dialogue with presenters in order to help support greater interest in and growth for automotive TPO applications," notes Dr. Norm Kakarala, retired, Inteva Products LLC and conference technical program co-chair. "To that end we encourage an active question and answer session after each talk and we provide ample networking opportunities throughout the conference so speakers and audience members can continue their discussions beyond the technical sessions. We believe this combination of timely and practical content and accessibility to speakers has helped our conference grow in terms of both sponsorship and technical programming over the years."

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Day 1 Technical Program

This year three topics in concurrent sessions run all day on *Monday, October 5* in back-to-back segments — one in the morning and two in the afternoon — following opening remarks, two keynotes, and a morning break sponsored by International Automotive Components (IAC) Group and an afternoon break sponsored by CIMBAR Performance Minerals. Lunch is sponsored by Sumitomo Chemical America, Inc., and the day ends with a networking reception sponsored by Advanced Composites, Inc.

Hall I features a session on ***Surface Enhancements*** organized by Dr. Rose Ryntz, IAC Group and Jim Keller, United Paint & Chemical. This session includes nine topics grouped into four focused enhancement areas: visual quality (two talks); scratch & mar (two talks on additives, one talk on measurement technique, and two talks on prediction models); tactile feel (one talk on polyurethane coating), and performance (one talk on stabilizers for increased durability).

Hall II hosts the ***Advances in Automotive Polyolefins*** session, chaired by Laura Soriede of Ford Motor Co. and Neil Fuenmayor of LyondellBasell Industries. It features eight presentations from industry leaders on the latest advances in additives, stabilizers, processing, and supply to the global automotive industry. New additives for scratch resistance, flame retardants, and durability improvements for thermoplastic polyolefins will be covered in the session, along with advances in elastomers for TPO paint adhesion performance, high melt-strength polypropylene for processing improvements, *lightweighting* solutions, and a study of surface flow marks affecting appearance parts are offered.

The ***Rigid Polyolefin Compounds*** session, organized by Mike Balow, Asahi Kasei Plastics North America, Inc. and Ermanno Ruccolo, Mitsui Plastics, Inc., features nine talks in **Hall III**. Covered topics include two presentations on understanding volatile-organic compound (VOC) emissions; three talks on short-, medium-, and long-glass fiber-reinforced compounds; and one each on ultralight TPO with a combination of long polymer fibers, glass bubbles, and injection-molded cellular foam; high-performance talc compounds; long-glass polypropylene (PP); and post-consumer recycled (PCR) long-glass PP.

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Day 2 Technical Program

On *Tuesday, October 6* the conference's second day features five different sessions, one that runs the whole day in three segments, two others that have back-to-back morning and afternoon sessions, and then two additional sessions that round out the second afternoon segment. The morning break is sponsored by Formosa Plastics Corporation, U.S.A. and the afternoon break by A. Schulman, Inc. Lunch is sponsored by KraussMaffei Group and the day ends with a networking reception sponsored by Wellman Advanced Materials.

Hall I will host the topic of ***Interior Soft Trim: Skins & Foams*** all day. The session was organized by David Helmer, General Motors Co. and Bob Eller, Robert Eller Associates LLC and will explore current and future prospects for TPOs and thermoplastic elastomers (TPEs) in this focal area of automotive plastics development. Both skins and foams are rapidly evolving technologies affecting aesthetics, safety, and vehicle performance standards. Not surprisingly, the topic will be discussed in presentations by speakers from North America, Europe, and Asia.

Lightweighting of Polyolefin Parts will run for two segments concurrently in **Hall II**. The subject will be chaired by John Haubert, FCA US LLC and Normand Miron, Washington Penn Plastic Co., Inc. The seven-paper session opens with a talk about how TPOs enable lighter designs using the example of the TPO liftgate featured on the *Renault Espace* multi-purpose vehicle (MPV). Weight-reduction technologies are then described in four talks on reduced density TPO; carbon fiber-reinforced PP; long-glass PP; and talc/cellulose fiber-reinforced PP. The session ends with talks on structural applications and interior and exterior applications.

Later in the afternoon, **Hall II** is the setting for a session on ***Process Enabling Technologies*** organized by Kurt Anthony, Washington Penn Plastics Co., Inc. and Dr. Suresh Shah, retired, Delphi Corp. Three topics are covered including delivering lighter weight, dimensionally stable parts with aesthetically acceptable surfaces via process synergies; dynamic behavior of core-material penetration in a co-injection multi-cavity molding (including review of the sensitivity to injection speed and skin/core ratio); and shear effects on the stability of compounded TPO (plus how flow-line defects result from use of shear-separate sensitive individual ingredients). The session continues in two more segments Wednesday morning.

Hall III hosts a two-part session on ***Adhesives & Coatings for TPOs*** organized by Dr. Pravin Sitaram, Haartz Corp. and Hoa Pham, Freudenberg Performance Materials. The session begins with a talk on materials with improved chemical resistance for automotive interiors and is followed by an hour-long talk on emerging technology and convergent thinking approaches for automotive coatings. In the afternoon, the session continues with talks on development of global emissions-compliant topcoats and primers for TPO materials, plus reactive film adhesive and hot melt adhesive for interior-trim applications.

Record Technical Program Planned for 2015 SPE Auto TPO Conference
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Later in the afternoon, **Hall III** hosts the first of a three-part session on ***Sustainability and Bio-Based Materials*** that is chaired by Susan Kozora, IAC Group and Dr. Ellen Lee, Ford Motor Co. The session features three presentations on the role of graphene nanoplatelets in TPEs; closed-loop recycling of olefins; and properties of a new polyethylene terephthalate (PET)/polyolefin compatibilizer to improve the physical properties of polymer alloys. The session continues Wednesday morning.

Day 3 Technical Program

The last day of the conference begins with opening remarks and a final keynote followed by a short break sponsored by the SPE Detroit Section. The morning features two final sessions in each of the three halls with a mid-morning break sponsored by Braskem.

In **Hall I**, a session on ***Polyolefin Underhood Applications*** chaired by Joel Myers, Hyundai America Technical Center, Inc. (HACTI) and Jim Hemphill, Dow Elastomers begins with a plenary talk on drivers for growth of polyolefins in underhood applications followed by a presentation on improved compatibilizers for nylon/PP blends. Additional topics include TPO use in powder coatings to protect automotive underbody parts; improvements in welding of high-strength long-glass PP; and use of post-consumer PP with novel glass fiber for underhood applications.

Tuesday's ***Process Enabling Technologies*** session continues in **Hall II** with discussions on high performance aluminum alloy to fabricate medium- to high-volume injection tooling (including grain development and grain repair on aluminum tools); a modular approach to implementing hot-runner valve-pin control technologies (which can greatly reduce the financial risk to molders by allowing them to evaluate the needs of a tool prior to making the investment); production efficiency via automatic mold change, high-gloss surface technologies, and increased reinforcement via back-molding of fiber composite materials; use of servo-driven valve-gate hot-runner systems to improve Class A surface finish and reduce/eliminate scrap; and innovative 3D printing and applications.

And in **Hall III**, the session on ***Sustainability and Bio-Based Materials*** also continues from Tuesday. It starts with an hour-long plenary talk offering a global overview of bio-based materials followed by three presentations on bio-filaments performance polymers, bio-filled PP compounds, and nano-cellulose filled PP.

After a bag-lunch sponsored by Trinseo LLC, the 2015 conference concludes.

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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 more than 700 attendees from 20 countries on four continents who are interested in learning about the latest in rigid and elastomeric TPO as well as thermoplastic elastomer (TPEs) and TPV (thermoplastic vulcanizate) 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. A variety of sponsorship packages are available for companies interested in showcasing their products and / or services. The show is organized by volunteers from the **Detroit Section** of the **Society of Plastics Engineers** (SPE).

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**, see <http://auto-tpo.com/> or <http://speautomotive.com/tpo.htm>. For more information about the Society of Plastics Engineers or other SPE events, see www.4spe.org.

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