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PRESS RELEASE

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Engineering plastics: a growing recycling market

Plastics Recyclers Europe publishes the Strategy Paper on the state of play of the Technical Plastic Parts recycling

In 2020 EU will generate an additional 46% of plastic waste coming from the electrical & electronic (E&E) sector in comparison to the year 2000¹. Engineering plastics today are the third most widely used material, after packaging and building & construction applications and represent 16%² of the total EU demand. They are extensively employed in both the automotive and the E&E sector as they are lighter, more durable, provide increased safety and overall have a better environmental performance when compared to other materials. Consequently, engineering plastics are the preferred material, replacing heavier and less resistant and less sustainable constituents. Taking into consideration the growing digitalization, their production and use will continue to grow very fast.

This means that Europe will be facing a growing amount of waste from technical plastic parts³. Recycling rates remain low, even though facilities and technologies to treat them do exist and are operational on an industrial scale. To give an example, only 300.000 tonnes of waste from electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) was destined for recycling at specialized European facilities in 2017, whereas the recycling capacity needed amounts to around 3 million tonnes.⁴

This shows the urgency needed to tackle the challenges that these streams present and to overhaul the obsolete waste management practices which have dominated previously. Antonino Furfari, Managing Director of PRE comments: 'Today we need to reach for the untapped material which is not fully exploited yet. This will require extra effort to guarantee the conditions necessary for the recyclers of technical plastic to boost further investment with the goal of transforming this material into a high-quality product.'

The change will need to implement an improved and increased collection system as well as additional sorting infrastructure. These measures should be complemented by enabling free WEEE material circulation across the Member States. A consistent and stable legislative framework is also a prerequisite to boost investors' confidence. The EU measures should lead to harmonized and balanced rules which increase the legal certainty for the end-of-waste criteria. Additionally, legal requirements should enable the appropriate management of substances of concern. EU wide certification for recycling facilities would ensure waste traceability and

¹ Urban Mine Platform. Available online at: <http://www.urbanmineplatform.eu/composition/eee/materials>

² Source: Plastics – the Facts 2018. An analysis of European plastics production, demand and waste data.

³ An alternative name for engineering plastics

⁴ Source : Responsible recycling of WEEE plastics containing Brominated Flame Retardants-BFR's. EERA.2018



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guarantee the highest standards to which a recycler must operate. The quality of the output material of a facility is key to its viability and success.

The Plastics Recyclers Europe's: *Technical Plastic Parts Strategy Paper. The way ahead for Automotive and Electrical & Electronic plastics* further elaborates on the measures that need to be taken in order to advance the treatment of this stream in the EU and presents the state of play in its production and recycling.

The advancing in the recycling of technical plastic parts will depend equally on the strengthened collaboration and coordination of the actions of the electronic appliances' manufacturers, automobile manufacturers, sorting centres, waste managements and recyclers, which is a must.

About us

Plastics Recyclers Europe (PRE) is an organization representing the voice of the European plastics recyclers who reprocess plastic waste into high-quality material destined for the production of new articles. Recyclers are important facilitators of the circularity of plastics and the transition towards the circular economy.

Plastics recycling in Europe is a rapidly growing sector representing €3bn in turnover, 6.6 mt of installed recycling capacity, 500 companies and 18.000 employees.

www.plasticsrecyclers.eu

Plastics Recyclers Europe

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