

Nanocomposites accelerate in automotive mouldings

*By David Vink in Brussels
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New materials are being specified for interior and exterior car parts.

19 March 2004 – US injection moulder Cascade Engineering and its compounding subsidiary Noble Polymers have claimed the first application of nanocomposites in an automotive interior part.

Noble Polymers business manager Tim Patterson told *EPN* and *PRW*'s Nanocomposites 2004 conference in Brussels it was supplying a 6% nanoclay-PP composite for the structural seat back of the Honda Accura TL 2004 car.

The Forte 35CPP091 grade used has been under development for two years and was introduced in September 2003. It replaces a 30% glass PP compound in the seat back.

Patterson said Noble Polymers is now on track to sell 3,000 to 4,000 tonnes of nanocomposite material in 2004. He said the firm is working on a further eight grades. One of the next applications targeted is the replacement of 20% glass fibre reinforced PP in office furniture parts.

Karl Kamena, commercial manager for Cloisite Nanoclays at Southern Clay Products, told the conference it had within the last few weeks begun supplying nanocomposite external parts to General Motors.

The side mouldings, made in a Basell nanocomposite, will appear on the Impala vehicle after it beat competition from talc-filled PP.