

More energy-efficient PET grades from Eastman

A PET grade described as 'the first and only reheat-enabled PET for still-water bottles' has been introduced by Eastman Chemical. The new Aqualor is said to require up to 30 per cent less additional energy for reheating preforms, and its low intrinsic viscosity of 0.72 gives higher injection speeds and a better definition of embossed or engraved surface imprinting.

Unlike other reheat PETs, says Eastman, Aqualor is haze-free, giving 'unsurpassed neck and sidewall clarity'.

Aqualor has been introduced alongside two other improved performance reheat PETs in Eastman's Vorcalor series. Vorcalor CB11E for carbonated soft drinks and beer is said to need up to 60 per cent less reheat energy than other PETs and its IV of 0.82 improves stress crack resistance and reduces creep. It also makes it suitable as the basis of a blend with lower IV, recycled PET in bottle-to-bottle recycling.

New Vorcalor 9921W extends the processing and performance of Eastman's standard PET 9921W grade. Its IV of 0.80 gives fast injection speeds and in addition to PET bottles it is suitable for film and sheet.

www.eastman.com

Machine manufacturer Kautex is sold again

GERMAN investment company Adcuram has sold blow moulding machinery manufacturer Kautex to Steadfast Capital, a private equity company based in Frankfurt specialising in management buy outs. Adcuram bought Kautex in 2004 from the SIG group of Switzerland, which in turn had bought it from ThyssenKrupp in 2000. Adcuram also bought the Battenfeld injection moulding machinery business from SMS last October.

It is understood that 75 per cent of the Kautex equity is held by Steadfast, with the remaining 25 per cent held by the five-strong management team led by Olaf Weiland, former head of technology at Krupp Kautex before moving to Krupp Corpoplast in 1999, and who rejoined Kautex at Adcuram as general manager in 2005.

The former owner of Kautex and still the

owner of Corpoplast, Swiss packaging systems group SIG, has itself been taken over. After a tussle between a grouping of Ferd – which owns the Norwegian Elopak packaging giant – and CVC Capital Partners of Luxembourg and Rank Group of New Zealand, Rank Group emerged the winner.

The emphasis in the takeover battle was on the carton businesses, with the PET bottle interests very much along for the ride. Elopak was aiming to bulk itself up to compete with TetraPak of Sweden, while Rank Group has a major position in the paper and cardboard packaging business in Australia and New Zealand.

Rank intends to continue to operate SIG under its current management team, to maintain its headquarters in Switzerland, and to keep the SIG name and brands.

energy efficiency

More interest-free funding for energy saving

ENERGY-saving specialist Powermaster has set up FundEnergy to help finance power-saving projects. The company produces a range of variable speed drives suitable for injection moulding machines, compressors, pumps and fans. The drives are programmed to reduce the speed of the motor by as much as possible as often as possible, and so produce significant reductions in consumption, costs and carbon footprint. According to Powermaster, annual site savings can be of the order of £5,000 to £10,000, with a cut of 20 tonnes in carbon emissions.

FundEnergy is a new funding stream that has been designed to fit into areas not covered by the Carbon Trust. It offers up to £100,000 of interest-free funding and promises monthly savings that outweigh loan repayments. FundEnergy will provide companies with a detailed analysis of energy consumption and make specific recommendations as to the most effective ways to cut costs and carbon emissions. FundEnergy will then provide finance to carry out the project, with repayment spread over a period of 12 to 48 months and made out of monthly energy savings.

Powermaster sales and marketing director Geoff Renshaw said, 'The great advantage of FundEnergy is that funding can be provided quickly. We were finding that most energy saving projects were taking 12 months to come to fruition. That meant companies were facing an additional year's worth of unnecessary energy

costs. With FundEnergy these same companies can begin to tackle their electricity bills and carbon emissions immediately.'

Powermaster balances the books by supplying the power-saving equipment but FundEnergy projects are not limited to the company's own products. Any energy-saving equipment can be considered provided it qualifies for tax relief under the enhanced capital allowances criteria, and that the pay-back period is under two years. For further particulars visit FundEnergy at www.fundenergy.co.uk.

Software predicts true cost of ownership of processing equipment

SOFTWARE to help predict the true cost of ownership of plastics processing equipment has been developed by RECIPE (Reduced Energy Consumption in Plastics Engineering).

The organisation says that purchasing decisions are often based on the initial cost of purchase and delivery, whereas an analysis of the energy consumption over the equipment's life time will give a different picture of the cost of ownership. It cites injection moulding machines where all-electric machines are typically more expensive to buy than hydraulic machines, but over their lifetime are less expensive to own and run because of their lower energy consumption.

RECIPE says its cost of ownership model will enable processors to calculate the cost

of operating a piece of equipment over its projected lifetime, based on energy efficiency and projected usage. The available reports will show comparisons of the lifetime cost of different machines as well as the differences in the cost when producing a specific part.

The new software has been introduced alongside RECIPE's free *European Best Practice Guide for Low Energy Plastics Processing* which aims to help organisations plan and implement an energy efficiency programme. It is aimed at all levels of management and operational staff and provides a structured and practical approach to improving energy efficiency in the processing of plastics. The guide can be downloaded from RECIPE's web site.

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