



press
release

Saint-Gobain's Saltillo Plant Achieves ISO 9001:2000 Certification

Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics facility implements quality management system.

Saltillo, Coahuila – April 3, 2009 – The Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics Saltillo manufacturing facility, in the state of Coahuila in northeastern Mexico, has achieved ISO 9001:2000 certification from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

ISO 9001:2000 certification verifies that a facility has established and implemented a quality management system. In ISO's own words, this refers to "what the facility does to fulfill the customer's quality requirements, and applicable regulatory requirements, while aiming to enhance customer satisfaction, and achieve continual improvement of its performance in pursuit of these objectives."

The plant, which is part of Performance Plastics' Polymer Products business, manufactures bearings, fabrics and high performance polymer products. Upon opening the facility ten months ago, company and plant management decided almost immediately to pursue certification. It took five months from that point to when the recommendation for certification was received last October.

All 135 employees worked to complete the many steps required to meet the relevant ISO standards (the plant has since added about 40 more employees). These steps included establishing a plan; training internal auditors from all departments; training operators and salaried personnel; developing and executing quality control procedures; conducting internal audits and implementing corrective actions; and finally, the external audit, which was carried out by TÜV SÜD América de México. S.A. de C.V.



Plant manager Luis Gerardo Palacios explains the benefits of ISO certification. “It all comes down to quality. When a defect is found, we have traceability and can quickly take corrective action. The systems we have in place also help us be more efficient when taking orders and responding to customer questions,” he said.

Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics management places a strong emphasis on this key quality standard. In fact, both Polymer Products plants in the United States — Bristol, Rhode Island, and Garden Grove, California — as well as five production sites located overseas (Willich, Germany; Kontich, Belgium; Shanghai, China; Rioja, Spain; and now Saltillo) have achieved ISO 9001:2000 certification.

The speed with which Saltillo was able to complete the necessary requirements is a testament to the efforts of the plant’s managers and employees, and their understanding of the importance of third-party verification of plant performance. “Our customers have grown to expect the highest quality from the Saint-Gobain Polymer Products group,” noted Steven J. Vaccaro, Marketing Manager. “Our success in achieving ISO certification is evidence of our ongoing efforts to maintain this level of quality and ensure continued customer satisfaction.”

Mr. Palacios and the rest of his team are not finished yet. Work is planned to begin in August on ISO/TS 16949, a quality management system that applies to the design, development and production of automotive-related products. Later this year Saltillo will embark on ISO 14000, which relates to a facility’s environmental performance.

Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics, part of the Innovative Materials Sector of Saint-Gobain, is headquartered in Aurora, Ohio, and employs 4,400 people in 15



countries. It is a world leader in high-performance plastics, including flexible tubing applications, seals, coated fabrics, films, foams, polymer products and bearings.

Saint-Gobain has had a strong presence in Mexico for nearly 50 years, with 2,500 employees, 13 industrial plants and a number of distribution centers and commercial offices located throughout the Mexican republic. The company is a leader in construction glass activities as well as the automotive industry, fiberglass and glass textiles, abrasives and high performance plastics.

Headquartered in Paris, Saint-Gobain is the world's leading producer of construction products and innovative materials such as abrasives, high-performance plastics, industrial ceramics and reinforcements; it is also the European leader in flat glass, packaging (glass bottles) and distribution of building materials. In 2008 Saint-Gobain had worldwide sales of \$64.4 billion, and employed 209,000 people in 59 countries.

For more information, visit www.rulon-meldin.com or call +1 401-253-2000.

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