

Press Release



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Covestro is involved in a new Europe-wide research project

Improving the recycling of polyurethane plastics

- **Complete circular product life cycle as target**
- **Funding by the European Union**

Together with partners, Covestro is investigating how recycling polyurethane plastics can be significantly improved. The materials manufacturer is part of the new Europe-wide research project called "PURESmart", which comprises nine companies and academic institutions from six countries. The goal is to develop a complete circular product life cycle and turn polyurethane into a truly sustainable material. One of the materials made of polyurethane is soft and hard foam, which is required for mattresses and upholstered furniture as well as for insulating buildings and cooling devices.

PURESmart will run for four years and will receive six million euros from the European Union under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (grant agreement No. 814543). The project, coordinated by the Belgian company Recticel, aims to recover 90 percent of the used polyurethane in order to create building blocks for existing or new products – for example a new polymer that combines the durability of thermosets with the recyclability of thermoplastics. Intelligent sorting methods are particularly important for efficient chemical recycling.

Obtaining new high-quality raw materials

Covestro is working on the best possible chemical recycling of polyurethanes after use during the project along with the qualitative treatment of the material flows that are generated during this. The aim is to obtain high-quality raw materials for new polyurethane applications. "Polyurethanes are a particularly versatile and widely used class of plastics that provide comfort and safety in many applications worldwide and, as an insulating material, contribute to energy



savings and thus to sustainability," says Dr. Nikola Schuck, who heads Covestro's contributions to PUReSmart. "Now it's time to increase the sustainable value of the material at the end of its useful life."

In addition to Covestro and Recticel, the companies BT-Wolfgang Binder (Austria), WeylChem InnoTec (Germany), Ecoinnovazione SRL (Italy) and Ayming (France) are involved in the PUReSmart consortium, which stands for a seamless and complete value-added chain in polyurethane reprocessing. Other academic partners are the University of Ghent (Belgium), KU Leuven (Belgium) and the Universidad de Castilla - La Mancha (Spain).

About Covestro:

With 2017 sales of EUR 14.1 billion, Covestro is among the world's largest polymer companies. Business activities are focused on the manufacture of high-tech polymer materials and the development of innovative solutions for products used in many areas of daily life. The main segments served are the automotive, construction, wood processing and furniture, and electrical and electronics industries. Other sectors include sports and leisure, cosmetics, health and the chemical industry itself. Covestro has 30 production sites worldwide and employs approximately 16,200 people (calculated as full-time equivalents) at the end of 2017.

This press release is available for download from the Covestro press server at www.covestro.com. The PUReSmart logo is available there as well. Please acknowledge the source of any pictures used.

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