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**FIRST USE OF SANTOPRENE® TPV FOR THE GLASS RUN CHANNEL ON 2002 JEEP® LIBERTY IS NAMED 2026 SPE® AUTOMOTIVE "HALL OF FAME" WINNER**

Troy, (DETROIT) MICH. – The industry's first application of Santoprene® TPV (Thermoplastic Vulcanizate) for a glass run channel (extruded profile in which car windows slide up and down), replacing EPDM (Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer) thermoset rubber, on the 2002 JEEP Liberty is named the 2026 SPE Automotive "Hall of Fame" Winner. This innovation reduced weight, cut manufacturing costs, improved performance and enabled material recyclability.

The weight savings was a 30% – 50% reduction compared to EPDM rubber enabling improved vehicle fuel efficiency. Manufacturing costs were reduced due to process efficiencies including less energy consumption, less capital investment, and more efficient use of space. Performance benefits included rubber-like sealing (against weather, dust and noise) with better long-term compression set at service temperatures, and improved long-term appearance (no surface blooming with heat aging). Recyclability of the thermoplastic material compared to EPDM rubber thermoset enabled sustainability improvements.

**Significant Part Weight Reduction**
TPV enabled up to an approximate 50% part weight reduction via lower density (compared to EPDM) and design optimization. TPV co-extrusion enabled the replacement of a metal carrier with a compounded PP carrier. The part re-design with TPV also enabled thinner wall sections. In addition, the new design used a slip coat eliminating the need for an adhesive and metal clamping was replaced with PP.

**Reduced Capital Investment, Smaller, Footprint, Less Energy Consumption vs. EPDM**
EPDM processing requires EPDM, carbon black, oil and filler with a rubber extruder processing at 125 – 375 kg/hr with an extrusion length, including cooling and cutting, of about 100 to 120 m which is high energy consumption for heating (hot air tunnel). TPV (Santoprene TPV pellets) are processed (one material vs 4) with a thermoplastic extruder at 200 to 400 kg/hr with an extrusion length, including cooling and cutting, of about 25m. The smaller footprint and streamlined process for TPV extrusion requires less cutting, energy usage and capital investment.

**Santoprene TPV GRCs (Glass Run Channels) Market Share**
Since their introduction over 20 years ago, Santoprene TPV glass run channels have been widely adopted by OEMs globally for numerous vehicle platforms. Demonstrated performance, cost and sustainability benefits drive continued market growth. About 90% of Japanese OEMs use TPV compared to 10% using EPDM. Approximately 60% of American OEMs use TPV compared to 40% using EPDM. (10% of French OEMs use TPE compared to 90% using EPDM). Around 10% of German OEMs use TPV compared to 90% using EDM. Total TPV global market share for GRCs is 55%.

This first use of TPV Santoprene on the Glass Run Channel, and the people and companies affiliated with it, will be honored and celebrated during the SPE's 55th annual Automotive Innovation Awards Gala on Nov. 4, 2026 at the Laurel Manor in Livonia, Michigan.

Representatives from Stellantis will accept the award at the event. The honor will be shared with Cooper Standard (who acquired Jyco the original System Supplier and Molder/Processor), and Celanese (who acquired the Santoprene TPV business from ExxonMobil in 2021.

To be considered for a Hall of Fame (HOF) Award, an automotive plastic or composite component must have been in continuous service in some form for 15 years or more, made a significant and lasting contribution to the application of plastics in automotive vehicles, and broadly adopted and/or expanded upon in the automotive industry. Additional HOF award criteria includes that the nomination be: game changing; very successful worldwide; innovative in materials, process and application; and still being used. This application certainly qualifies as TPV Glass Run Channels are now an industry standard globally.

Established in 1970, the SPE Automotive Innovation Awards is the oldest and largest competition of its kind in the world. Dozens of teams made up of OEMs, tier suppliers, and polymer producers submit nominations describing their part, system, or complete vehicle and why it merits the claim as the Year's Most Innovative Use of Plastics. This annual event typically draws 600 - 800 OEM engineers, automotive and plastics industry executives, and media. As is customary, funds raised from the event are used to support SPE educational programs and technical conferences, which help to secure the role of plastics in the advancement of the automobile.

Sponsors of the 2026 SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Gala to date include: Celanese, BASF Corporation, American Chemistry Council – Plastics Division, ExxonMobil, and INEOS Styrolution. Sponsorship for the 2026 event is still in progress. In 2025, Sponsors included: Celanese, BASF, American Chemistry Council – Plastics Division, 3M Advanced Materials, Covestro Engineering Plastics, Elring Klinger Automotive Manufacturing Inc., Omya Specialty Materials, Sabic and Nifco.

The mission of SPE is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. SPE's Automotive Division is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments in all phases of plastics and plastic-based composite developments in the global transportation industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more info on the SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Competition and Gala go to: hcps://speautomotive.com/spe-automotive-div-innovation-awards/.

For more info on the SPE Automotive Division go to: https://speautomotive.com/.
For more info on the Society of Plastics Engineers go to: hcps://www.4spe.org/.