



GLASS FOR EUROPE

Europe's Manufacturers of Building, Automotive and Transport Glass

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

New Study Shows Potential to Cut Building CO₂ Emissions Using Glass Technology

Brussels, 26 November 2007 An important technological opportunity for energy savings in buildings, according to a study presented today in Brussels. But policy makers must act in order to make this potential a reality.

Proper application of “solar control glass” technology could cut CO₂ emissions in Europe by anywhere between 15 and 80 million tonnes per year. But policies to encourage or mandate the environmentally optimal use of this technology remain to be adopted.

Solar control glass reduces solar heating of air-conditioned buildings by sending the sun’s heat back out and away from the building instead of letting it through. By significantly reducing the load on air-conditioning systems, it saves large amounts of energy.

The industry association Glass for Europe (formerly GEPVP – Groupement Européen des Producteurs de Verre Plat), which brings together Europe’s four main producers of building and automotive “flat glass” products, today presented a study carried out by the Dutch institute TNO. The study asks what would happen if solar control glass, instead of “normal” glass, were used on all air-conditioned buildings – new buildings and refurbished existing ones.

Even assuming that air-conditioning in Europe remains only at current levels, this practice would already save 15 million tonnes of CO₂ per year by 2020. But in fact air-conditioning is expected to rise significantly in Europe. If it were to reach levels similar to those in the US, the study finds, then as much as 80 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions would be saved by consistent use of solar-control glass.

The reality is expected to lie somewhere between the two scenarios, with air-conditioning use rising significantly but not all the way to US levels.

Presenting the study at a conference today in Brussels, the glass industry recalled the ambitious requirements that the EU has set for the building sector – namely to save 300 million tonnes of CO₂ per year by 2020 – and called upon policy makers to seize the opportunity presented by solar control glass to help achieve the targets that they have set.

Rick Wilberforce of Pilkington called this opportunity “the low-hanging fruit” and encouraged policy makers to pluck it: “We are all aware of the urgency of fighting climate change. Here is an opportunity to make a major contribution in the building sector.” Alain Jardinot of AGC (formerly Glaverbel) underlined the opportunity: “Scientific facts alone do not bring change. Ensuring that the potential benefit of solar control glass is realised requires the right public policies.”

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