

Press Release

European innovation award EARTO 2016 goes to Semperit and PCCL

Vienna, 13 October 2016 – Last night, Semperit and the Polymer Competence Center Leoben GmbH (PCCL) received the European innovation award EARTO 2016 in Brussels for the development of Sempermed® Syntegra UV, the first anti-allergenic surgical glove worldwide. With innovative production technology, unique product characteristics and an energy-efficient manufacturing process, both development partners prevailed against a total of 35 competitors. A unique feature of this product is that the surgical glove – which is made from polyisoprene, a material similar to natural latex – is cured using UV light instead of potentially allergenic chemical accelerators.

“We are very happy that we were able to bring the EARTO, the most important European innovation award, to Austria. This proves the high innovation power of Semperit. With the Sempermed® Syntegra UV, we have succeeded in developing a surgical glove that prevents allergic reactions. Since it was brought onto the market in 2013, it has enabled us to contribute to an improvement in the quality of life of millions of professionals in the European healthcare sector,” says Richard Ehrenfeldner, Chief Operating Officer of Sempermed. There was also great joy about the award at the UAR associated company PCCL, says Martin Payer, Chairman of the Board: “For us, the EARTO is a major recognition of our research work for several years. Our goal was a results-oriented, efficient research that we were able to realise in the best way with Semperit as our partner. The next innovation by PCCL and Semperit is already in the pipeline.” Wilfried Enzenhofer, CEO of Upper Austrian Research GmbH, emphasises: “We are very proud that a research cooperation of Upper Austrian Research received the desired EARTO innovation award 2016. This proves once again that the research performance of the UAR Group is at the highest international level.”

CO₂ footprint reduction

Alongside the innovative production technology, the EARTO judges were also convinced by the unique properties of the Sempermed® Syntegra UV. The glove that is gentle on the skin is equivalent to a premium latex surgical glove in terms of tactile sense, wearer comfort and fit. A further factor was the energy-efficient manufacturing process, which by means of lower temperatures and higher throughput rates leads to a significant reduction in the CO₂ footprint. The process is patented and has already received a number of awards.

EARTO (European Association of Research and Technology Organisation) is an international non-profit organisation based in Brussels. With the EARTO Award, the organisation recognises innovations, which bring substantial social or economic benefits to the EU. The award was presented this year for the eighth time in succession.

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About Semperit

The publicly listed company Semperit AG Holding is an internationally-oriented group that develops, produces, and sells highly specialised rubber and plastic products in more than 100 countries for the medical and industrial sectors: examination and surgical gloves, hydraulic and industrial hoses, conveyor belts, escalator handrails, construction profiles, cable car rings, and products for railway superstructures. The headquarters of this traditional Austrian company, which was founded in 1824, are located in Vienna. The Semperit Group employs more than 7,000 people worldwide, including close to 4,100 in Asia and more than 800 in Austria (Vienna and production site in Wimpassing, Lower Austria). The group has 22 manufacturing facilities worldwide and numerous sales offices in Europe, Asia, America and Australia. In 2015, the group generated sales of EUR 915 million and EBITDA of EUR 96 million.

About Sempermed

Sempermed is the largest segment of the Semperit Group and is ranked among the international leading manufacturers of medical and industrial gloves. At Sempermed's research centre in Wimpassing, lower Austria, new products are continually developed and tested in close cooperation with users and experts. For more than 95 years, Sempermed has been producing gloves of the highest quality and as the worldwide leader in technology we are setting standards in terms of quality and innovation. Sempermed guarantees optimum safety and reliability, highest production hygiene and strictest quality checks.

About PCCL

The Polymer Competence Center Leoben GmbH (PCCL) is the leading centre for collaborative research in polymer technology and polymer science in Austria. Together with companies in the polymer industry and universities (among others Montanuniversität Leoben) our nearly one hundred experts carry out R&D projects for innovative polymer solutions in diverse applications, including automotive, aerospace, packaging and solar and photovoltaic applications. This is completed by the K project "Functional Polymer Composites (PolyComp)" in the field of polymer-based composites for electro-technical and electronic applications (www.pccl.at).

About UAR

As the leading organisation for research of the federal province of Upper Austria, Upper Austrian Research GmbH (UAR) supports Upper Austria in its research policy-related tasks – in particular in the fields of strategy, project development, coordination, internationalisation, building strategic alliances & networks as well as marketing & communication. In addition, UAR holds numerous shares in renowned research centres. The associated companies of UAR are closely interlinked with each other but also with the entire national and international research landscape. This close cooperation creates a market-based innovation process and gives companies the decisive edge (www.uar.at).