
*Jonathan Jones, left, and Kevin Simoneaux demonstrate virtual reality training for ExxonMobil's Polypropylene Growth Project, which will soon produce products for lightweight auto parts.*

## EXXONMOBIL BATON ROUGE

# CREATING EVERYDAY PRODUCTS FOR MODERN LIFE

**From improving the** quality of highway markings to reducing vehicle weight leading to increased fuel efficiency, products made by ExxonMobil are impacting the transportation industry and our daily lives in a positive way.

The paint used to stripe our roadways is not paint at all, but rather a layer of polymer that is sprayed onto the road, and ExxonMobil's Baton Rouge Finishing Plant has a large role in producing the main component.

"It's not quite paint, it's plastic," says Justin Williamson, the business team lead at the Finishing Plant. "There's a reason it's made the way it is. You wouldn't want your road markings coming up when it's really cold or hot outside."

Williamson says that is what happens when crews use traditional paint for road markings – the white and yellow stripes, arrows and crosswalks that guide us through highways, roads, bike lanes, parking areas or airports. Instead, the product produced by ExxonMobil provides stable performance in hot and cold weather, abrasion resistance for longer wear and reflective values. The product also dries in about two minutes after application and is extremely hard to withstand automobile traffic.

To create the product, the Finishing Plant receives a hydrocarbon liquid from ExxonMobil's Baton Rouge Chemical Plant and finishes it into a solid glue pellet or pastille. The pastille, along with two other products made at ExxonMobil's Baton Rouge Plastics Plant, are then sold to companies that produce the "paint" used for road markings. Those companies turn the materials into a powder, and thermoplastic striping trucks melt the powder and spray it onto roadways.

While not every roadway is sprayed with this product, it is useful on major highways where the paint needs to last and needs to be reflective. Williamson estimates that the material sold by ExxonMobil to the road marking industry accounts for approximately 250,000 miles of striping per year.

"It's mind blowing to me to think about all of the products we make – at the Finishing Plant and all throughout the Chemical Company – that are a key part of the conveniences of modern life," Williamson says.

Meanwhile, ExxonMobil is expanding its Baton Rouge operations with the addition of the Polypropylene Growth Project at the Baton Rouge Polyolefins Plant, which will produce products for lightweight automobile parts out of polypropylene. The plastic is being used increasingly in today's cars – in components such as hoods, mirrors, headlights, fenders, front bumpers, etc. – because lighter cars lead to increased fuel economy and release fewer CO2 emissions in the process and maintain safety and performance.

For example, blow-molded plastic fuel tanks aid fuel economy by reducing overall vehicle weight compared to metal. Additionally, components can be added to the inside of a tank during the blow-molding process; this eliminates the need for attachment holes, which can reduce and eliminate volatile organic compounds, or VOCs.

The Polypropylene Growth Project is on track to start up by the end of 2022. The plant's current polypropylene line mainly produces a polymer used for restaurant take-out containers, medical gowns including surgical masks, diapers and wipes and cups. The new polypropylene line will produce a copolymer for large parts for automobiles, as well as some of the plastic components of large appliances like washing machines, dishwashers and refrigerators. Currently, ExxonMobil also provides specialized resin for the fuel tanks used in both Ford F150 and Super Duty trucks, in addition to multiple converters used around the world.

"ExxonMobil makes products to improve fuel economy," says Keitt Wannamaker, Polypropylene Growth Project Manufacturing Manager. "These are only a few of the end products that are critical to society and made right here in Louisiana."

4045 Scenic Hwy., Baton Rouge, LA 70805 | exxonmobilbr.com