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Polymers & Plastics Roundtable - Wednesday, June 12, 2002 (2:00-3:30 P.M.)

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This session was divided between an overview of polymer information resources presented by Kathy Longaberger, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. and a tutorial on searching polymers on STN presented by John Zabilski, Chemical Abstracts Service. The roundtable was jointly sponsored by SLA's Materials Research & Manufacturing Division and the Chemistry Division.

Kathy Longaberger briefly explained basic polymer terminology such as thermoplastics and thermosets. Web sites and resources from universities, associations, societies, companies, trade journal publishers, reference books, and database vendors were reviewed. The important databases mentioned were Chemical Abstracts (CAPLUS), RAPRA, World Patents Index, Science Citation Index, and Compendex. Most trade journals such as *Plastics Technology* and *Modern Plastics* publish very helpful buyer's guides or special issues on equipment and material. Mark's Encyclopedia of Polymer Science and Technology published by Wiley is the best known encyclopedia in this field.

John Zabilski provided an overview of the many files on STN providing technical and business information about polymers. Detailed examples of searching polymers in the Registry and CAPLUS files were provided. Factors that do not affect polymer registration, i.e. separate numbers are not assigned, include molecular weight, monomer ratios in addition polymers, and head-to-head vs. head-to-tail arrangements. Factors that do affect polymer registration generating a separate record are tacticity (stereochemistry), end-groups, and block, graft, & alternating polymer forms. The importance of using registry numbers and controlled vocabulary thesaurus in searching was emphasized. The presentation ended with an example of finding polymer properties in the Plaspec database. The CAS Learning Center web site contains an excellent, free guide entitled *Polymer Information on STN: A Quick Reference Guide* at <http://www.cas.org/ONLINE/QRGUIDES/polymer.pdf>. This guide covers much of the information presented at the roundtable.