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Low Iron Solar Glass Market Shares, Strategies, and Forecasts, Worldwide, 2011 to 2017

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Abstracts

WinterGreen Research announces that it has a new study on Low Iron Solar Glass Market Shares and Forecasts, Worldwide, 2011-2017. The 2011 study has 325 pages, 146 tables and figures.

Strong consideration needs to be given to on-line coatings which increase the cell performance, TCO, self-cleaning and anti-reflective.

According the Susan Eustis, principal author of the study, 'factors driving this market represent concerns about energy security, energy prices, climate change and cost of carbon. Increased demand for electricity is a significant market trend. There is a need for replacing existing electricity generating capacity.'

Low iron solar glass technology gives solar panel and solar concentrator vendors the ability to build more efficient systems. Improved cost structures of the solar industry depend in part on improved efficiencies in low iron glass manufacturing.

Low iron glass is used by the solar industry. Low iron glass market growth is tied to solar market growth. Glass vendors are emerging as experienced and innovative partners for solar plant operators. Float glass plants are designed for PV glass for thin film and solar panels. Vendors are emerging that are dedicated to the production of PV thin film glass.

Solar key market growth factors driving demand include above all government subsidies. Although there is local variation, in the aggregate, subsidies are expected to continue and increase. There is not a more useful way for a government to spend its tax dollars than to stimulate growth of relatively inexpensive local sources of energy.

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Efforts to drive full employment depend on a shift of defense budgets to renewable energy spending. Initially, renewable energy spending will come through the defense budgets worldwide, but as governments realize that the auto industry drives economies, they will begin to fund renewable solar energy used to create electricity for electric vehicles.

The industry depends on achieving economies of scale to lower costs of manufacture. Solutions to reach grid parity are needed in order for solar to become a long-term viable business. Among the most important issues are coating technology and novel structures. In the field of machining and finishing of thin glass with strengths of 0.95 mm, glass is used for concentrating solar thermal power plants (CSP). Lead-and copper-free protection and coating systems are used for solar energy applications.

For parabolic-reflector power stations thinner glass units are interesting. The thinner the glass is, the higher the degree of reflection. Mirror components, bending and the application of optical and functional layers rank among the core competencies of glass makers. Glass makers are extending their product sets and improving technology to cover the spectrum of flat solar glass processing.

PV float glass plants require specific designs for the batch plant, to prevent contamination by iron particles, the furnace due to the increase of melt temperatures (emissions!), the tin bath and the lehr due to an increased cooling effect.

Specific dimensions and thicknesses are required for solar glass. Properties requirements are different than for standard glasses. Typical glass lines deal with a variety of different thickness and / or grades. Solar glass depends on production of ultrabright sheets. Solar glass is inefficient due to set-up times and the requirement of large stocks.

Traditional flat glass is not optimal for solar glass R&D efforts are needed to optimize production of PV thin film solar glass to reduce the PV glass costs. The glass properties need to be stable for 25 years. They need to be able to withstand huge environmental insults e.g. hail, acid rain, UV.

There are significant initiatives worldwide illustrative of solar energy installation growth. Examples include Abengoa innovative technology solutions efforts to achieve sustainable development in the energy and environment sectors. Abengoa is generating electricity from the sun. Abengoa has been offered conditional commitment for $1.2

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billion US Federal Loan Guarantee to build the California based Mojave solar project.

Saint-Gobain PV sales:are strong at € 300million in 2010. The company has an aggressive goal of € .2billion for 2015.

SunRun and U.S. Bancorp have formed a partnership to purchase $200 million worth of solar residential systems in the U.S. SunRun installs $1 million of residential solar energy panels per day. SunRun operates in eight U.S. states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oregon and Pennsylvania.

Solar electricity makes regulatory frameworks a necessity. Solar market growth is occurring as systems reach grid parity. Solar technologies are being further developed. Feed-in tariffs have proved to be the most effective way of encouraging demand. Markets depend on public policy. Public pressure is pushing for stable support frameworks. The market is tied to the oil price. Cheap oil and gas reduce the pressure to seek alternative sources for electricity generation.

Market growth of low iron glass is predicated to achieve wild growth at some point as solar energy becomes significantly less expensive than fossil fuel based energy. Solar energy needs low iron glass that is manufactured close to the place the panels are being used to reduce the costs of transportation. Investment in existing low iron solar glass is needed to leverage existing and new economies for solar manufacturing. Low iron glass depends on the availability of rare earth metals.

PV low iron glass represents 3% of the world glass production. Markets for low iron glass at $1.5 billion in 2010 are expected to reach $3.8 billion by 2017. Growth is expected to achieve marked improvements in these ratios with low iron glass coming in at 15% of total glass production in 2020, i.e. the same level as automotive glass.

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