



## Opel Puts Saftey Up Front with Alcan Aluminum Bumpers

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NOVI, MI ([PRWEB](#)) July 23, 2004 -- Alcan's state-of-the-art aluminum front-bumper beams are making an important contribution to the safety system of the new Opel Astra from General Motors Europe. More than a million bumper beams a year are now being manufactured for Opel models alone.

"Aluminum structural components have become the technology of choice for many European automakers to both reduce vehicle weight and enhance safety," said Michel Jacques, president and CEO, Alcan Engineered Products. "These lightweight components provide high potential for further improvement in weight reduction, safety and structural stiffness."

In 2003, Alcan produced more than six million side-impact beams, two million bumper systems and more than one million instrument-panel supports for the automotive industry.

In the event of a minor collision, the repair-friendly design of the new Opel Astra serves to reduce repair-shop time and cost. A key component in the design is the Alcan front bumper. Produced at Alcan Automotive's crash-management center in Gottmadingen, Germany, the front-bumper beam features an innovative design, which includes a special aluminum extrusion attached to the vehicle body via high-strength crash boxes. The energy-absorbing characteristics of the system prevent expensive damage to structural components in a low-speed collision.

A unique bending method used in Alcan's automated production-line process permits the shaping of high-strength materials to exact tolerances, ensuring safety, repairability and cost benefits for the end customer.

Steadily increasing sales confirm the attractiveness of Alcan solutions to customers. Alcan also has developed lightweight bumper beams for Audi, BMW, Jaguar, the Mercedes Car Group and Peugeot-Citroen. In total, Alcan manufactures 15 different bumper systems, 18 side-impact beams and three types of instrument-panel supports. To meet growing demand, Alcan Automotive added three new production facilities to the crash-management competence center that it opened in 2000. Alcan also has invested in new fabrication methods and manufacturing equipment designed to keep pace with the Opel Astra's needs.

Alcan is replicating its success in Europe with aluminum bumper beams by transferring the technology to North America. In April 2004, it opened a bumper-beam production facility in Novi, Mich., and an additional factory in Saguenay, Quebec, Canada, is now under construction.

Alcan is a multinational, market-driven company and a global leader in aluminum and packaging, as well as aluminum recycling. With world-class operations in primary aluminum, fabricated aluminum as well as flexible and specialty packaging, aerospace applications, bauxite mining and alumina processing, today's Alcan is even better positioned to meet and exceed its customers' needs for innovative solutions and service. Alcan employs 88,000 people and has operating facilities in 63 countries. Further information is available on the internet at [www.alcanautomotive.com](http://www.alcanautomotive.com).



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