



# PRESS RELEASE

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STRUCTURAL PLASTICS 2000/VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

## FGL's road to success paved with mats

By Roger Renstrom  
PLASTICS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA — Mold maker FGL Precision Works Ltd. keeps diversifying its product line, and has won recognition for its work on a challenging project.

"FGL has not isolated itself to just structural foam or injection molds," Chief Executive Officer Sol Algranti said in an interview at Structural Plastics 2000, held March 26-28 in Vancouver. "We also do compression molds, and we've recently done rotational molds."

Frank Meisels and two brothers founded FGL in Ontario in 1965. His nephew, Tom Meisels, is FGL's vice president.

The firm responds to daunting challenges.

"FGL has a reputation for building large aluminum molds, but also as a company willing to get involved in new ideas," Tom Meisels said.

For example, FGL got involved in mid-1997 when Loma Co. was constructing a plant in Carencro, La., to make structural road mats, but could not find a firm to make the molds.

"They had plans in place, and construction was already done on the plant, but they had hit an obstacle in getting the molds built," Tom Meisels said. "We were very interested [and] decided to go along with it."

FGL won the conference award and building and construction award at the Society of the Plastics Industry Inc.'s Structural Plastics Division meeting. Both were for the huge mat Loma makes with FGL molds.

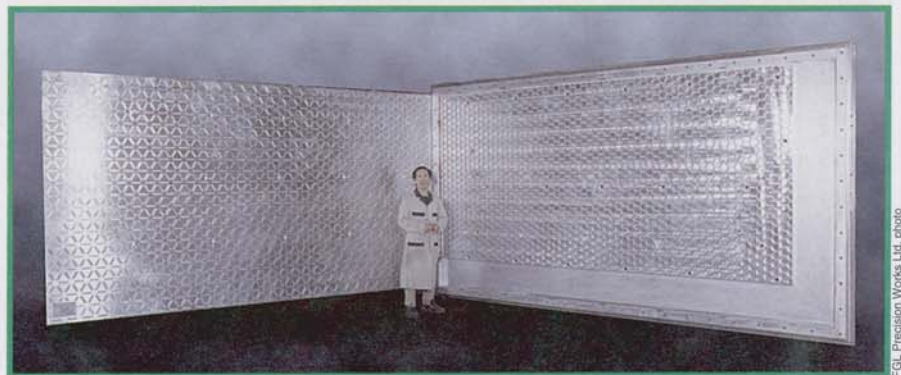
In last year's contest, FGL won the materials-handling award for a large plastic container made with another FGL mold.

FGL employs 75 at two Ontario locations. The main Concord site makes medium-size and large molds up to 45 tons.

The firm acquired KNT Precision Works Ltd. in October and operates the business now as an autonomous division. KNT is in Brampton and makes intricate small and medium-size molds.

Meanwhile, Loma's operations are growing, and its high density polyethylene mats are withstanding gigantic stresses.

Fina Inc., now part of TotalFinaElf SA of Paris, recently moved South Korean-built chemical pro-



A technician stands between two giant 94-inch-by-166-inch tools for a grating plate compression mold from FGL Precision Works Ltd. FGL, of Concord, Ontario, has built a reputation on making large aluminum molds.

cessing vessels of 700 tons and 1,200 tons on the mats, Loma Vice President Ken Seaux said in a telephone interview. He and his father, Paul, started Loma in late 1994.

Those weights exceed original expectations, but future mats may be able to endure greater stresses.

Loma is working on a way to "fuse one part to the other and match up the honeycomb hexes,"

he said. A new method could increase the mat's stiffness by a factor of six.

"We are looking at technology for other panel requirements," he said. Possibilities include flooring for outdoor storage buildings.

Users place a layer of geo-textile material on the ground to prevent erosion and minimize mud seepage between joints. Soloco LLC of Lafayette, La., leases the Dura-Base mat system as a

replacement for wooden mats.

Loma had 1999 sales of \$18 million, and Seaux forecasts \$25 million this year. "We are looking at expanding our customer base" including potential military applications, Seaux said.

Initially, Loma placed an order with FGL for 12 molds. Subsequently, Loma ordered 12 more sets that were completed in June. Each set weighs about 10,000 pounds.

## "[FGL] responds to daunting challenges"

## Stand Up lifts gardening to the next level

By Roger Renstrom  
PLASTICS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA — Paul Harris enjoyed gardening while growing up on a dairy farm, but he disliked the need to stoop. "I realized I didn't like the ergonomics," said Harris, president of Stand Up Gardens Ltd.

His concept of comfortable gardening has become a reality in a low-pressure structural foam product. The polyethylene vessel sits on a wood stand — several styles are available — with an optional overhead arbor and 400-watt halogen grow light.

"I thought I would enjoy gardening more standing up," said Harris in an interview at the March

26-28 SPI Structural Plastics 2000 conference in Vancouver, where the product was entered into the event's design contest. The countertop height is comparable to stands used in commercial nurseries. Each vessel can hold up to 400 pounds of soil and water. The system permits year-round gardening, and also facilitates use by individuals in nursing homes or wheelchairs, who may need to remain seated.

His Portsmouth, N.H., company sells a basic module for \$500. Horizon Plastics Co. Ltd. of Cobourg, Ontario, uses PE and glass filler in molding the vessel on a press of 300 tons or 400 tons. The end cap and belly snap together. FGL Precision Works Ltd. of Concord,

Ontario, made the three-cavity mold and was instrumental in development work.

The system uses an irrigation manifold including polypropylene piping and tubing and a controller that permits self-watering based on sensing soil moisture. A user can insert an acrylic divider to segregate a section of the vessel for a water garden with a circulating fountain and colorful fish.

Stand Up Gardens and Arato Design of Toronto used computer-aided-design software in creating the product line.

Harris used a spray-up fiberglass process in 1998 for initial production but moved to foam molding for garden vessels that began reaching the market in July,



Without getting his knees dirty, Paul Harris of Stand Up Gardens Ltd. gives his green thumb a workout at his firm's low-pressure structural foam vessel.

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