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Konarka Technologies installs OPV semitransparent building transparent PV curtain wall

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Konarka Technologies Inc., manufacturer of Konarka Power Plastic, a lightweight, flexible solar material that converts light to electricity, finished one of the largest organic photovoltaic (OPV) installations of its kind and the first OPV semitransparent building integrated photovoltaic curtain wall, according to a release. Easily laminated onto glass, these semitransparent solar panels were installed in the company's New Bedford facility.

"Organic PV is much less energy intensive to manufacture compared with crystalline silicon," said Howard Berke, chairman, CEO and co-founder of Konarka, in the release. "Konarka's transparent photovoltaic film is ideal for glass curtain walls because of its superior low light sensitivity, thermal performance, light weight and performance over a wide range of sunlight angle of incidence."

In the facility, Konarka's Power Plastic is installed in both south and east facing walls. Being able to integrate solar panels into multiple walls delivers greater electrical output. Typical solar installations occur on rooftops, although there is generally far more area to accommodate PV system integration in building walls, especially in multistory buildings.

The panels are lightweight, flexible and versatile, offering various large and small scale applications including curtain walls, components within windows and other building integrated and building applied categories. The company's roll-to-roll manufacturing process facilitates fabrication of custom sizes preferred by architects in new construction and retrofit applications. Solar panels are available in a variety of colors and degrees of optical transmissivity, according to the release.

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