BUILDING THE FUTURE

Plastics and Composites

The development of new plastics and composites materials — and the process of applying those materials within manufacturing and production systems — is a natural outgrowth of the Greater Wichita region's global aerospace and advanced manufacturing leadership. As experts in building complex systems and products, the industries within the Greater Wichita region are proud to be at the forefront of research, development, and manufacturing of plastics and composites.

#1
MANUFACTURING SPECIALIZED REGION IN THE U.S.

18%
OF EMPLOYMENT IN MANUFACATURING (8.5% IN U.S.)

#1
BEST CITY FOR MANUFACTURING

1st
ALL-COMPOSITE AIRCRAFT DESIGNED MANUFACTURED IN WICHITA

See the full list of data points, rankings, and sources

Plastics and Composites: Leadership Across Industries

Stronger, lighter, and more versatile materials offer innovations for multiple industries, not only aerospace. Explore the following examples of the Greater Wichita region's industries and companies developing, applying, and leveraging the advantages of advanced plastics and composites.

For years, Spirit AeroSystems has been developing and industrializing materials systems for large-scale aerospace manufacturing — from the days of all-metal components and structures through two generations of composites and, now, to tests on ceramic matrix composites (CMCs) for higher-temperature applications. Spirit AeroSystems builds the complete composite forward fuselage for the Boeing 787 Dreamliner.

Lead Technology Composites (LTC) produces vehicle and personal protection equipment for defense customers, structural and non-structural aerospace components for global aerospace companies.

A specialist in OEM and custom composites, Fiber Dynamics creates parts for precision applications used by both the military and civil authorities. Fiber Dynamics' diverse abilities aid the production of landing gear, missile systems and motorsport vehicles, as well as flight control pieces for unmanned aerial vehicles.

The National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) at Wichita State University is the headquarters of the Center of Excellence for Composites and Advanced Materials (CECAM), a division of the Federal Aviation Administration's Joint Advanced Materials and Structure Center of Excellence. The mission of the organization is to provide the nation with a center for the validation and quality assurance of aircraft composites and advanced materials.

Insights

- In March 2019 the U.S. Economic Development Association awarded Wichita State University a $2 million grant to fund the development, and demonstrate the success, of advanced composite material manufacturing technology.
- America Makes, a national accelerator for additive manufacturing managed by the National Center for Defense Manufacturing and Machining (NCDMM), opened an aerospace additive manufacturing center at NIAR.

Connect With Us

- Site selectors and business owners are invited to explore the reasons to Locate and Expand in the Greater Wichita region.
- Learn more about the region's #1 Manufacturing Workforce for highly trained and highly skilled employment.

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Greater Wichita Partnership
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