

Plastic in Action

Safety & Protection

Plastics play a vital role in keeping people safe—on the road, in the field, and during emergencies. Engineered for strength, flexibility, and reliability, these materials absorb impact, resist heat, and withstand extreme conditions. From automotive safety components and protective helmets to body armor and emergency shelters, plastics provide essential protection for individuals, communities, and those who serve on the front lines.



Modern automotive safety components—from seatbelts to airbags—are made with plastic. Plastic materials in car bumpers deform upon impact, reducing harm to passengers and critical vehicle components.



Impact-resistant polycarbonate and other advanced plastics are used in protective gear, body armor, vehicles, and equipment—safeguarding firefighters, military personnel, and emergency responders from heat, impact, and hazardous conditions.



Plastic bike helmets contain expanded polystyrene (EPS) or expanded polypropylene (EPP) that absorb energy on impact, cushioning the head during a crash.



Plastic polypropylene (PP) panels, PVC-coated fabrics, and reinforced polyethylene sheets are often used in emergency housing for disaster victims and medical tents for field hospitals.

Plastic keeps us safe and protected every day.

More than one million Americans work in jobs directly or indirectly connected to the plastics industry, spanning a wide range of sectors. From the engineers who design the machinery that manufactures essential plastic products, to the material suppliers distributing raw plastics, to the processors shaping materials into goods, and the recyclers giving used plastic a second life, the plastics supply chain is a vital aspect within both the U.S. and global economy.