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Of Beer and Bottles

24 December 2006, 10:30

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If the beer industry could switch from glass and aluminum containers to plastic bottles, it would cut costs. However, the plastics used in plastic bottles have not been as effective glass and aluminum at keeping oxygen molecules out of the containers and this is a major problem while beer is being stored. Now, kitty litter producer AMCOL has developed a nanocomposite that might enable beer to be sold in plastic containers. This potential was raised when *The Wall Street Transcript* interviewed nanotech analyst Peter Conley for its report on nanotechnology. Conley noted that the material retains carbon dioxide and resists oxygen, toward which beer is sensitive, and that many beer producers are looking at introducing plastic containers. According to the American Plastics Council, Anheuser-Busch tested a 16-oz plastic bottle at Madison Square Garden during the late 1990s. In next month's issue of *Materials Today*, Cinzia Casiraghi and colleagues will review the use of ultra-thin carbon films for ultra-long beer storage in plastic bottles.
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