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PEV Infrastructure Supercharging New Copper Demand

According to research commissioned by the International Copper Association (ICA), the rising number of plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs) is expected to drive a total copper demand of 560,000 tonnes through to 2027, with new demand expected to rise to 102,000 tonnes due to the crucial role played by copper in port charging cables and units, and wiring to electrical panels.

Though currently just 1–2% of global car sales, the research—undertaken by consulting firm Navigant Research—predicts that technological developments, CO₂ regulations and concerns around air pollution will cause global PEV sales to rise 14% by 2027. With a greater number of cars comes a greater need for charging infrastructure, and copper's intrinsic values give it a dominant role in the market.

'This research underscores the vital role copper plays within PEV charging infrastructure,' says Colin Bennett, Global Manager, Market Analysis and Outreach, ICA. 'We are at an exciting moment for the copper industry, as the PEV market grows and continues to have a positive impact on society.'

Factors Impacting Future Demand

'The amount of copper inside residential charging units is modest compared to the wiring installed to connect chargers to electrical panels, meaning a change in deployment—from charging at home to commercial charging—could require four to nine times as much copper, depending on the extent of the shift,' says John Gartner, Director at Navigant Research.

The same is true for the type of charger used. Higher power requires more copper because of the need for larger gauge wires, so a faster uptake in direct current (DC) charging would significantly increase copper demand. Equally, policies requiring buildings to have charging facilities installed would have a major impact.

Further information will be presented during the American Copper Council's Copper College event, taking place 9 May 2018.

About the International Copper Association (ICA)

ICA brings together the global copper industry to develop and defend markets for copper and to make a positive contribution to society's sustainable development goals. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., ICA has offices in four primary regions: Asia, Europe and Africa, Latin America and North America. Copper Alliance programs and initiatives are executed in nearly 60 countries through its regional offices. For additional information, please visit www.copperalliance.org.



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