



Material Technologies Shares Climb Since Collapse of Bridge

By Will Daley

Aug. 13 (Bloomberg) -- Shares of Material Technologies Inc., which tests cracks in bridges, have increased 33 percent since the Minnesota bridge collapse and the company's founder projects a rise in demand for its services.

Material Technologies checks bridges by attaching patches to "fatigue-critical locations," said Chief Executive Officer Robert Bernstein. A heavy truck is driven over the bridge and a computer analyzes the results.

Bernstein called the company's procedures like an electrocardiogram for bridges. Interest in Material's services has increased since the Aug. 1 collapse in Minneapolis with nine confirmed dead, said Bernstein, who founded the company.

"I can't honestly say a lot of orders have come in, but I think the interest has grown very substantially," he said today in a telephone interview.

The average age of a bridge in the U.S. is 50 years, and they are used by heavier trucks than in the past, Bernstein said.

"It's not bad engineering, or bad construction, it's age," he said.

Bernstein is the company's largest holder, with about 30.1 million shares, or 28.3 percent of the stock, according to Bloomberg data. Bernstein said he holds voting control.

"I've been saying a long time, it's going to take a tragedy to open up people's eyes," he said.

Shares of the Los Angeles-based company fell 5 cents, or 3.7 percent, to \$1.31 at 12:26 p.m. in over-the-counter trading. They had dropped 64 percent in the year through Aug. 1.

To contact the reporter on this story: Will Daley in Chicago at wdaley2@bloomberg.net

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