Whirlpool Corporation Wins Favorable Verdict Against LG Electronics in Delaware Patent Litigation

BENTON HARBOR, Mich., March 12, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- Whirlpool Corporation (NYSE: WHR) announced that it won a favorable jury verdict against LG Electronics in a patent infringement lawsuit in the US District Court in Wilmington, Delaware. The jury awarded Whirlpool Corporation monetary damages of $1.78 million based on LG's manufacture and sale of side-by-side refrigerators that infringe Whirlpool Corporation's patent for a refrigerator in-the-door ice system. Based on this jury verdict Whirlpool Corporation will be seeking a permanent injunction to stop LG's continued infringement of the patent when final judgment is finalized later this year.

The main patent at issue was Whirlpool Corporation's US Patent 6,082,130 directed to a refrigerator in-the-door ice system. The jury found that certain LG-manufactured side-by-side door refrigerators infringe on Whirlpool Corporation's patent. Following Whirlpool Corporation's commercial success with this popular feature beginning in 2000, LG launched refrigerators with the same feature in an effort to catch up with Whirlpool Corporation's advanced technology. Whirlpool Corporation initiated legal action in 2008 to enforce its patent rights. Additionally the Delaware jury found no violation under secondary patents of LG and Whirlpool Corporation that were involved in the case.

"We're very pleased with today's decision," said Greg Miller, general manager, refrigeration, Whirlpool North America Region (NAR). "Whirlpool Corporation has a long history of delivering first-of-a-kind innovations that meet consumers' needs. Our In-Door-Ice solution, which provides more convenient storage of ice on the door and increased freezer space, is a great example of our leadership. We are pleased that the Delaware jury has acknowledged our intellectual property rights, and that it has issued this verdict to help protect our company's investments in technology from those who would unfairly use our innovations for their own benefit. This judgment will help Whirlpool Corporation continue to reinvest to meet consumer needs through advanced technology."

Additionally, the jury found that Whirlpool Corporation does not infringe a patent that LG asserted related to refrigerator water dispenser technology. While LG claimed infringement of only a small percentage of Whirlpool Corporation refrigerators sold, Whirlpool Corporation provided the jury with compelling evidence that it invented the technology claimed by LG, as well as that it practiced its invention and not LG's later concept. Whirlpool Corporation has a patent application on its technology currently pending before the US Patent Office and has initiated an interference proceeding where it is seeking priority over LG's asserted patent, based on Whirlpool Corporation's earlier invention date. Whirlpool Corporation expects the US Patent Office to confirm that it owns the rights to this invention in the future.

The jury verdict marks the conclusion of a seven day trial in Delaware based on litigation that commenced in 2008. Whirlpool Corporation expects the Delaware District court to issue a judgment finalizing today's verdict later this year.

About Whirlpool Corporation

Whirlpool Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances, with annual sales of approximately $17 billion in 2009, 67,000 employees, and 67 manufacturing and technology research centers around the world. The company markets *Whirlpool, Maytag, KitchenAid, Jenn-Air, Amana, Brastemp, Consul, Bauknecht* and other major brand names to consumers in nearly every country around the world. Additional information about the company can be found at http://www.whirlpoolcorp.com/.