Whirlpool Announces North American Manufacturing Changes

Oxford, Miss., and Puebla, Mexico, Plants to Close

BENTON HARBOR, Mich., July 10 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Whirlpool Corporation (NYSE: WHR) today announced manufacturing production changes to its North American manufacturing operations, which include the closure of its Oxford, Miss., and Puebla, Mexico, manufacturing facilities.

(Logo: http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20040202/DETU004LOGO)

Units produced at Oxford will be transferred to Cleveland, Tenn., resulting in approximately 500 new jobs in Cleveland. Production at Puebla will be moved to Celaya, Mexico, resulting in an additional 140 jobs in Celaya.

Research conducted as part of the company's global operating strategy indicated that the consolidation of built-in ovens and cook-tops currently made at Oxford into the Cleveland facility will better leverage the scale and size of that operation. The same research showed that moving the semi- automatic washers produced at Puebla into the company's Celaya facility would better leverage existing resources and provide greater efficiencies for the organization.

"These kinds of decisions are never easy, and we make them only after comprehensive evaluation of alternatives," said Al Holaday, vice president, Manufacturing Operations, North American Region. "This consolidation, like other changes we've made as part of our Global Operating Platform, will help ensure that Whirlpool Corporation maintains its leadership position in today's changing global marketplace."

"This is in no way a reflection on our Oxford or Puebla employees, who by all accounts have performed very well," added Holaday. "We will work closely with the employees to help ensure as smooth a transition as possible."

Whirlpool will provide support to impacted employees and their families during the transition period, including severance and transition assistance.

Whirlpool Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances, with annual sales of approximately $19 billion, 73,000 employees, and 72 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.

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