Whirlpool Corporation Announces Changes in its China Manufacturing Operations

BENTON HARBOR, Mich., April 7 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Whirlpool Corporation (NYSE: WHR) today announced manufacturing production changes to its China operations, which include the closure of its washing machine manufacturing facility in Shanghai, China.

The closure of the Shanghai factory will result in the elimination of about 600 positions. Whirlpool has established several measures in accordance with Chinese Labor laws to provide support to all affected employees during this change.

The company's China regional headquarters, a research and development center, and its commercial and administrative operations are unaffected by this change, and will remain located in Shanghai. These operations employ approximately 480 people.

Moving forward, production of washing machines will be consolidated into the company's Hisense-Whirlpool joint venture facility, located in the ChangXing Economic Development Zone, in the ZheJiang Province. The facility, which also manufactures refrigerators, will create 900 new jobs by end of 2009.

Research conducted as part of the company's global operating strategy indicated that consolidation of washers at the ZheJiang factory, will benefit from the greater scale and size of that facility, optimize the use of existing resources and provide cost savings for the organization.

"This consolidation, like other changes we've made as part of our global operating strategy, are difficult but necessary, to ensure that Whirlpool Corporation maintains its leadership position in today's changing global marketplace," said Paulo F.M.O. Periquito, president of Whirlpool International. "Whirlpool sees great potential in the Chinese market and in its consumers, and we believe these moves will enable us to speed up innovation and continue to build the best quality and best cost products for our customers in China."

In April 2008, Whirlpool formed a 50/50 joint venture with Hisense Kelon for the development and production of washing machines and refrigerators. As part of this joint venture, both companies have agreed to share research, technology and development capabilities, in addition to engineering and manufacturing expertise for washers and refrigerators.

About Whirlpool Corporation

Whirlpool Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances, with annual sales of approximately $19 billion, 70,000 employees, and 69 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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