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A. O. Smith Earns Brand Leader Awards

Water Heating Manufacturer Comes Out On Top In Builder Magazine User Study

ASHLAND CITY, Tenn. (Mar. 11, 2010) – A. O. Smith Water Products Company (www.hotwater.com), the leading manufacturer and marketer of residential and commercial water heaters, has earned two Brand Leader Awards in *Builder Magazine's* 2010 Brand Use Study, earning the company two Brand Leader Awards. The annual study is the only third-party research performed in the new construction industry.

The survey looked at four brand areas—brand familiarity, brands used by firms in the past two years, brands used most, and brand quality—and evaluated manufacturers accordingly. A. O. Smith was among the top four brands in all categories, while ranking first as the brand used by firms in the past two years and the brand used most.

This year's study included a new question in the water heater category, asking participants about their willingness to try new brands over the past two years. The results showed that 42 percent of participants were somewhat more willing to try new brands known for quality, advanced or new product features or "green" features.

"It is encouraging to see the willingness of builders to try new products," said David Chisolm, A. O. Smith brand manager. "A. O. Smith has a portfolio of new, high-efficiency products being launched in the very near future that will allow builders to differentiate themselves and offer significant value to their customers in the area of high-efficiency water heating."

The study, sponsored by Hanley Wood, was conducted by Readex Research. Data was collected via a mail survey sent to 10,800 recipients with a 29 percent response rate.

About A. O. Smith:

Headquartered in Ashland City, Tenn., A. O. Smith Water Products Company is a leading manufacturer and marketer of residential and commercial water heaters and hydronic boilers. A. O. Smith offers contractors an additional competitive advantage in that the company designs, builds, distributes and field supports the world's broadest and deepest line of residential and commercial water heaters, as well as commercial boilers. This single-source concept simplifies ordering, installation and service and is backed by more than 70 years of research and innovation. For additional information, visit www.hotwater.com.