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Former A. O. Smith CEO Thomas Dolan dies at age 84

Milwaukee, Wis. (Jan. 2, 2012) —Thomas I. Dolan, who served as chairman and chief executive officer of A. O. Smith Corporation from 1984 until 1989, died on Dec. 25 at the age of 84.

Dolan joined A. O. Smith as a senior vice president in 1980 after a 30-year career in the home appliance industry. He was responsible for the company's consumer products division which included residential and commercial water heaters, as well as the former A. O. Smith Harvestore Products Company subsidiary. In 1981, he was named head of all major product divisions of the company and the following year was elected president, chief operating officer, and a member of the company's board of directors.

In July 1984, he was elected chairman and chief executive officer of the company, succeeding Lloyd B. Smith, the great-grandson of the founder of A. O. Smith. Dolan was the second non-Smith family member to lead the company. He was chief executive officer of the company until 1989 and was chairman of the board until 1992. He remained a member of the board of directors until retiring in 1996.

"Tom Dolan led A. O. Smith during one of the most challenging periods in its history," Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Paul W. Jones said. "The country was suffering through back-to-back recessions, and the domestic automotive industry (at the time A. O. Smith's largest business) was going through an extensive restructuring."

"Tom not only returned the company to profitability, he created the foundation for our subsequent success and growth."

While in Milwaukee, Dolan was active in a number of community organizations, serving as a director of the Medical College of Milwaukee, a corporation member of the Milwaukee School of Engineering, a member of the board of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, and as a member of the Greater Milwaukee Committee. In 1987, he served as campaign chairman of the United Way of Greater Milwaukee.

He also was a director of the First Wisconsin National Bank (now US Bank), a trustee of Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, a member of the executive committee of the Machinery and Allied Products Institute, a council member of the International Executive Service Corps, a member of the Society of Automotive Engineers, the Business Roundtable and the Business Council.

Prior to joining A. O. Smith, Dolan spent 30 years with White Consolidated Industries or its predecessor companies. He rose from an entry-level engineer to become president of the company's Kelvinator subsidiary before being named a senior group vice president of White Consolidated. In his last position at White Consolidated, he was responsible for a portion of the company's appliance operations including refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, laundry equipment, gas and electric ranges.

Dolan was a graduate of the University of Michigan with a degree in industrial/mechanical engineering.

About A. O. Smith Corporation:

A. O. Smith Corporation is one of the world's leading manufacturers of residential and commercial water heating equipment and boilers, offering a comprehensive line featuring the best-known brands in North America and China, as well as water purification products for residential and light commercial applications. A. O. Smith, headquartered in Milwaukee, Wis., employs approximately 10,500 people at operations in the U. S., Canada, Mexico, India, China, and the Netherlands.

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