



News Release

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Local Legislator Recognizes A. O. Smith Plant Safety Achievement

JOHNSON CITY, TENN. (September 16, 2010) – A. O. Smith Corporation executives and local elected officials were here today to help the employees of the A. O. Smith Water Products Company Plant celebrate their latest record-setting safety achievement, working 10 million hours without a lost-time accident.

State Rep. and House Majority Leader Jason Mumpower (R-D3) presented employees a copy of the resolution he recently sponsored in the State Legislature recognizing their nearly five years without a lost-time accident.

The 1,200 employees in Johnson City worked from Nov. 23, 2005, to June 28, 2010, to reach their latest safety milestone. To date, the plant, which manufactures residential and light commercial water heaters, has worked more than 10.4 million hours without a lost-time accident.

“You continue to set the standard for outstanding safety achievement at A. O. Smith,” Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Paul W. Jones said at the special recognition ceremony.

“I know all of you appreciate the recognition, but, to me, this isn’t really about records or trophies. Safety is not a competition. It’s about keeping every one of our employees healthy and safe at all times. After all, these men and women all have families who count on them, who want them to come home safe and sound every day. That is a huge responsibility, and I marvel at how all of you have stepped up to the challenge and helped make Johnson City what it is today,” Jones continued.

Jones singled out the plant’s Safety Steering Committee, members of Local 7739 and the union leadership, and the plant’s leadership team for their roles in emphasizing the importance of workplace safety.

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In addition to congratulating the employees on their safety record, Water Products Company Senior Vice President-Operations Steve Anderson thanked Johnson City for the role it played in helping make up for the lost production of the company's Ashland City plant. Ashland City was closed for four weeks in May following the historic flooding of the Cumberland River.

In the days following the flood, Anderson said, the company transferred Ashland City's water heater production to Johnson City and three other A. O. Smith water heater plants.

"Thanks to the efforts of you and hundreds of your colleagues throughout the company, we were able to return to pre-flood production levels in just a matter of weeks,"

Anderson told the Johnson City employees. "And even though we lost some sales in the disrupted days following the flood, we did not lose a single customer. We showed our customers and the entire water heater industry that when we say we're going to take care of the customer, we are able to back those words with actions."

"And in spite of all of the stress and the distractions and the extra hours, no matter how tough things were, you continued to work accident-free," Anderson continued. "To me, that just offers further proof that workplace safety is not some slogan or another program at Johnson City. It is an attitude that is thoroughly engrained in your culture."

The 467,000 square foot Johnson City plant implemented its current plant-wide safety program in 1995, managed by a 25-person Safety Steering Committee that meets twice each month. The Safety Steering Committee is responsible for monitoring safety performance, overseeing training programs, and reviewing every safety-related incident in the plant.

The plant has conducted regular safety training programs for all employees since 1995, and safety is included as part of all training throughout the facility. Last year, Johnson City began a pilot program using online safety training in a new computer safety lab. Topics covered range from lock-out/tag-out procedures to fork lift driver recertification coursework.

The plant's safety staff works closely with the Johnson City United Steelworkers Local 7739 Safety Committee, conducting regular review meetings and a monthly walk-through of the production areas.

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Each year, the plant selects a safety theme and ties its promotional and training efforts to that theme. The plant also makes a point of recognizing employees' efforts through commemorative gifts and celebrations.

About A. O. Smith Corporation

A. O. Smith Corporation, with 2009 sales of \$2.0 billion, is a global leader applying innovative technology and energy-efficient solutions to products marketed worldwide. The company is one of the world's leading manufacturers of residential and commercial water heating equipment, offering a comprehensive product line featuring the best-known brands in North America and China. A. O. Smith is also one of the largest manufacturers of electric motors for residential and commercial applications in North America. For more information about A. O. Smith Corporation, visit www.aosmith.com.

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