



Ashland Castings Solutions Expands to India

DUBLIN, Ohio, Jan. 5 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Service to the metal castings industry in India has improved thanks to an expansion there by Ashland Casting Solutions, a business group of Ashland Specialty Chemical, a division of Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH).

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"India is an important and emerging market for many Ashland products, and it is in the top seven casting producing countries in the world," said Mike Swartzlander, vice president, Ashland Specialty Chemical, and general manager, Ashland Casting Solutions.

Ashland's expansion into India's castings market will be implemented in phases. Sales offices, providing cold-box and no-bake binders, are now operating and will be followed by planned local manufacturing in 2008. In addition to Ashland's U.S. manufacturing capabilities, the company's facilities in Changzhou, China are dedicated to producing materials for the castings industry.

"Because of our existing presence there through the joint venture between Valvoline and Cummins, we are able to quickly begin our product offering to this important market," added Swartzlander. The joint venture between Valvoline and Cummins was established more than 10 years ago and provided existing capabilities that Ashland's Castings Solutions business used to promptly begin service to customers.

"Our India presence is led by Rohan Desai, located in Mumbai, India. From there, he and our other castings employees are well positioned to service our Indian foundry customers," said Philip Vernon, commercial director, emerging markets for -- Ashland Casting Solutions. "We are very excited about expanding the opportunities for Ashland Casting Solutions in India, and building beneficial relationships with our customers there."

The initial offering of Ashland casting products will include ISOCURE® cold box binders, PEPSET® no-bake binders, furan no-bake binder technology and a full line of coating products.

Ashland Casting Solutions, a business group of Ashland Specialty Chemical, is a leader in supplying products, processes and technologies to the global metal casting marketplace. The group has operations (including licensees and joint ventures) in 21 countries.

Ashland Specialty Chemical, a division of Ashland Inc., is a leading, worldwide supplier of specialty chemicals serving industries including adhesives, automotive, composites, metal casting, merchant marine, paint, paper, plastics, watercraft and water treatment. Visit www.ashspec.com to learn more about these operations.

Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH) is a Fortune 500 chemical and transportation construction company providing products, services and customer solutions throughout the world. To learn more about Ashland, visit www.ashland.com.

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/CONTACT: Media, Ken Gordon of Ashland Inc., +1-614-790-1832, or kdgordon@ashland.com

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