



January 23, 2004

Marathon Ashland Petroleum Advises Customers of 1Q Maintenance

FINDLAY, Ohio, Jan. 23 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Marathon Ashland Petroleum LLC (MAP), owned 62 percent by Marathon Oil Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Marathon Oil Corporation (NYSE: MRO), and 38 percent by Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH), is advising its customers that it expects to meet their needs while scheduled refinery maintenance projects occur in the first quarter.

Overlapping, planned maintenance projects, including investments in the "Tier 2" ultra-low sulfur gasoline production upgrades, will reduce MAP's 935,000 barrel-per-day crude oil capacity such that it expects to process about 775,000 barrels per day of crude oil in the first quarter of 2004.

"We want our customers to know that meeting customer needs was our first priority while planning this heavier than normal turnaround schedule," said Gary R. Heminger, MAP president.

Based in Findlay, Ohio, MAP is the nation's sixth largest refiner with 935,000 barrels-per-day capacity in its seven-refinery system. MAP's retail marketing system comprises approximately 6,000 locations in 15 states, more than half of which are Marathon brand locations. MAP serves the Midwest and Southeast as a petroleum products marketer with 86 light product and asphalt terminals and access to about 8,000 miles of pipeline.

This news release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the "safe harbor" provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The forward-looking statements are about MAP's refinery maintenance projects and crude oil capacity in the first quarter of 2004. These statements are good faith estimates and preliminary, and therefore, subject to change. The actual results of operations can and will be affected by a variety of risks and other factors that could cause these estimates or beliefs to differ materially from that stated herein.

SOURCE Marathon Ashland Petroleum LLC

"Safe Harbor" Statement under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995: Statements in this press release regarding Ashland's business which are not historical facts are "forward-looking statements" that involve risks and uncertainties. For a discussion of such risks and uncertainties, which could cause actual results to differ from those contained in the forward-looking statements, see "Risk Factors" in the Company's Annual Report or Form 10-K for the most recently ended fiscal year.