MSA and MCR Safety Establish Joint Venture to Create First Full-Line Glove, Garment and Safety Products Company Serving the Retail Market

PITTSBURGH, July 25, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- MSA (NYSE: MSA) ofPittsburgh, Pa., a leading global manufacturer of safety equipment for worker and facility protection, and MCR Safety of Memphis, Tenn., a global leader in gloves and safety garments, today announced that they have established a joint venture to create a new operating company dedicated to the do-it-yourself (DIY) and independent contractor market for safety products. The venture's newly established brand – Safety Works® – combines MSA's leading line of respirators, hard hats and fall protection products with MCR's premium brands that include Memphis Gloves, Crews Eyewear and River City Garments. Retail versions of these products will be identified with the new Safety Works® brand. The joint venture agreement is expected to formally close in September.

The new entity will have the full backing of both MCR and MSA, and creates the first full-line glove, garment and safety products company in the North American retail market. Under the terms of the agreement, MSA and MCR will jointly share ownership of Safety Works. This joint venture is exclusive to the retail divisions and will not impact their individual industrial division product lines. MSA's current Director of Corporate Development, Harry Kunze, who served as an early business director of MSA's consumer products business, will transition into a new role as President and CEO of Safety Works.

With nearly a 100-year history of serving the industrial, first responder and military markets, MSA entered the consumer products market in 1998 with the establishment of MSA Safety Works. Over the past 13 years, the retail arm of MSA has sold consumer versions of its products through many North American home center, hardware and rental market channels, including at such widely recognized retailers as The Home Depot, Do it Best and True Value. Additionally, MSA retail products are distributed to thousands of independent retailers by Orgill.

Likewise, MCR Safety has had success selling to major North American retailers including Sears, Kmart, Menards, Northern Tool and The Andersons. To date, these efforts have resulted in MSA and MCR Safety products being offered in more than 10,000 storefronts and being used by millions of North American consumers.

"I feel strongly that combining the resources of MCR Safety's Consumer Products team with the MSA Retail team makes sense for both MSA and MCR Safety," noted MCR Safety CEO Mitch Lewellen. "The glove and garment category is closely aligned with the safety category, and combining a full line of gloves, safety vests and rainwear with a full line of personal safety products in the retail market makes tremendous sense for both of our two companies and the retailers we serve."

"Our decision to partner with MCR Safety and establish a separate operating company dedicated to the retail market aligns very well with our corporate strategy," said William M. Lambert, MSA President and CEO. "A key element of our strategy is to grow MSA's business by focusing on our core product lines," he explained. "The addition of MCR's products to MSA's retail line adds important strength in the two leading product areas for the retail market—gloves and eyewear. Overall, this new venture will leverage the strengths of both organizations to create a full-line of the highest quality safety products available in the retail market," Mr. Lambert said.

MSA's John Shields will serve as Safety Works' Vice President of Safety Products Sales, while MCR Safety's Alan McNeil will be Safety Works' Vice President of Glove Sales. Safety Works' marketing efforts will be lead by MSA's John Quinn, who has been named Vice President of Marketing and Product Development. Terry Damico, a 35-year veteran of MSA, will direct Safety Works' operations. Combined, Safety Works' leadership team has more than 125 years of safety market experience, much of it earned in the retail market.

Established in 1914, MSA is a global leader in the development, manufacture and supply of safety products that protect people's health and safety. Many MSA products typically integrate any combination of electronics, mechanical systems and advanced materials to protect users against hazardous or life-threatening situations. The company's comprehensive line of products is used by workers around the world in the fire service, oil, gas and petrochemical industry, homeland security, construction, mining and other industries, as well as the military. Principal products include self-contained breathing apparatus, gas masks, gas detection instruments, head protection, ballistic body armor, fall protection devices and thermal imaging cameras. The company also provides a broad range of consumer and contractor safety products through retail channels. These products will soon be marketed and sold under the Safety Works brand. (More information on Safety Works products is available at www.SafetyWorks.com .) MSA has annual sales of approximately $1 billion, manufacturing operations in the United States, Europe, Asia and Latin America, and 42 international locations. Additional information is available on the company's Web site at www.msanet.com .

MCR Safety has more than thirty-five years of experience as a leader in the field of personal protective equipment (PPE). MCR Safety's combined standard-setting products and industry-defining levels of service are backed by an unwavering commitment to excellence. Three product brands— Memphis Glove , Crews Glasses , River City Garment — make up the heart of MCR

Safety. MCR Safety was born out of the union of Memphis Glove, Crews Incorporated, and River City Protective Wear. These three industrial safety companies bonded with the goal of providing the best equipment at the most competitive prices, and with service that is second-to-none. MCR Safety sells product to safety equipment distributors around the globe. MCR Safety has manufacturing and distribution centers in the United States, Mexico, Canada, South America, and Asia. MCR Safety's Consumer Products group operates out of Memphis and has customers across North America.

SOURCE MSA

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