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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HD SUPPLY UTILITIES AWARDED GOLD FOR
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

ORLANDO, FLA. – January 12, 2009 – HD Supply Utilities, North America’s largest electric utilities distributor, announced its Learning and Organizational Effectiveness team was awarded the Gold Learning Team Award by *Chief Learning Officer* magazine for its industry-leading training and development program.

“Our training and development program creates value for our associates and provides them with the tools and skills they need to be successful,” said Rick McClure, President, HD Supply Utilities. “It helps us to secure a competitive advantage in a market where competition for top-notch talent is robust. A successful learning program also creates value for our customers by ensuring our associates possess the knowledge and training required to better serve our customers’ needs.”

HD Supply Utilities has more than 850 associates, most of whom have completed the classroom or Web-based training, or a combination of both programs. In 2008, the HD Supply Utilities Learning Team delivered more than 7,000 hours of training in key areas such as sales, operations, quality, customer focus, and technical skills.

“Our training and development program is strategic and customer-focused,” said Vicki Ryan, Senior Manager, HD Supply Utilities Learning and Organizational Effectiveness. “For us, training is more than developmental. It is a retention tool and talent acquisition strategy, especially for the Gen Xers and Yers.”

HD Supply Utilities’ training program primarily focuses on leadership development, operational excellence, technical training and quality, sales and customer service skills.

The learning team utilizes a Before, During & After (BDA) implementation approach. “In our experience, training is most effective when BDA is considered from the vantage point of the learner, the manager and the instructor,” Ryan added.

Before implementation, the learning team communicates with the managers and the learners about the training program. They review what it is, why it is important and how the curriculum aligns with their goals.

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During the learning session, the learning team asks managers to check in on the participants and ensure they are not interrupted or distracted by their normal job duties.

After the session, immediate follow up and reinforcement of the curriculum from the learning team is critical to ensuring the new skills and knowledge have been absorbed and are being applied in the workplace.

About HD Supply Utilities

As North America's largest electric utilities distributor, HD Supply Utilities (www.hdsupply.com/utilities) is an HD Supply business (www.hdsupply.com), a leading wholesale distribution company, providing a broad range of products and services to professional customers in the infrastructure & energy, maintenance, repair & improvement and specialty construction markets. With a diverse portfolio of market-leading businesses, HD Supply is one of the largest diversified wholesale distributors in North America, with approximately 900 locations.

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