

# LEVI STRAUSS & CO.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **LEVI STRAUSS & CO. AND HENNES & MAURITZ AB ANNOUNCE GLOBAL BAN ON SANDBLASTING**

SAN FRANCISCO and STOCKHOLM (September 8, 2010) — As a commitment to the health and safety of workers across the apparel industry, Levi Strauss & Co. and Hennes & Mauritz AB (H&M) today announced plans to implement a global ban on sandblasting in all of their future product lines. The two companies are encouraging others to join this ban in a move toward eliminating sandblasting as an industry practice.

Sandblasting is one of a number of finishing techniques used to create a worn look for denim and other apparel. When sandblasting is performed, proper safeguards, such as those used by Levi Strauss & Co. and H&M suppliers, must be in place to protect workers from potentially serious harm resulting from exposure to crystalline silica (a compound found in sand). But there are some factories in the apparel industry – often linked to counterfeit operations – which do not apply the same safeguards, putting workers' health at risk.

"At Levi Strauss & Co., we've implemented rigorous standards for sandblasting in our own supply chain but we decided that the best way to help ensure no worker – in any garment factory – faces the risks associated with exposure to crystalline silica is to move to end sandblasting industry-wide," said David Love, Senior Vice President and Chief Supply Chain Officer at Levi Strauss & Co. "We're proud to join with H&M today in a commitment to apparel workers world-wide and we urge other companies to join us in ending this practice."

"H&M has had health and safety requirements for sandblasting for several years. Like all other Code of Conduct requirements, monitoring of sandblasting practices has been part of our extensive Full Audit Programme. At the same time, securing that these standards are being observed by all of our suppliers and their subcontractors has proven too difficult. In order to make certain that no worker producing denim garments for H&M risks his or her health, we have decided to quit purchasing and retailing sandblasted products," said Karl Gunnar Fagerlin, Production Manager at H&M.

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Effective immediately, Levi Strauss & Co. and H&M will not place any new orders for sandblasted product and as of December 31, 2010, Levi Strauss & Co. and H&M will no longer have any active production that uses this finishing technique. The ban includes, but is not limited to, the use of aluminum oxide, aluminum silicate, silicon carbide, copper slag and garnet for abrasive blasting.

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#### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

A quote from Aron Cramer, President and CEO, BSR, about this announcement: "I applaud the step that LS&Co. and H&M have taken to phase out sandblasting globally. The move they are announcing today builds on their legacy of leadership in ensuring that their products are made under safe and fair working conditions."

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#### **About Levi Strauss & Co.**

Levi Strauss & Co. is one of the world's largest branded apparel companies and the global leader in jeanswear, marketing its products in more than 110 countries worldwide. The company designs and markets jeans, casual wear and related accessories for men, women and children under the Levi's®, Dockers®, Signature by Levi Strauss & Co.™ and Denizen™. Levi Strauss & Co. reported fiscal 2009 net revenues of \$4.1 billion. For more information, go to <http://levistrauss.com>.

#### **About H&M**

H & M Hennes & Mauritz AB (publ) was founded in Sweden in 1947 and is quoted on NASDAQ OMX Stockholm. The company's business concept is to offer fashion and quality at the best price. In addition to H&M, the group includes the brands COS, Monki, Weekday and Cheap Monday as well as H&M Home. The H&M Group has around 2,000 stores in 37 markets. In 2009, sales including VAT were SEK 118,697 million and the number of employees was around 76,000. For further information, visit [www.hm.com](http://www.hm.com).