



MSA Agrees to Acquire Surety Manufacturing of Canada; Acquisition Strengthens MSA's Fall Protection Line and Presence in New Markets

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PITTSBURGH, Dec. 11 /PRNewswire/ -- Mine Safety Appliances Company (Amex: MSA) ("MSA") today announced it has reached an agreement to acquire Surety Manufacturing and Testing Ltd. of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, a leading provider of fall protection equipment and rescue systems to the railway, construction, and utility markets. The transaction is expected to be finalized during the first quarter of 2001. Under the terms of the agreement, Surety will become part of MSA Rose, the company's fall protection affiliate based in Englewood, Colorado. MSA acquired Rose Manufacturing in 1996.

The acquisition, according to John T. Ryan III, MSA chairman and CEO, provides a great complement to the existing line of MSA Rose products and services, and positions the company to capitalize on many emerging sales opportunities, particularly in those industries where Surety has been strong. In addition, the Surety line includes a broad range of rescue and retrieval systems, which further enhances MSA's product offerings to its largest market, the fire service.

"This is a great, strategic fit for us," Mr. Ryan said. "Four years ago we made a commitment to the fall protection market by acquiring Rose Manufacturing. With the acquisition of Surety, we are enhancing and solidifying our position as one of the top providers of fall protection and rescue equipment. The acquisition of Surety enables us to reach new markets for MSA while offering customers an even broader line of quality products, training and services all focused on delivering the best fall protection available."

Surety, which serves customers in Canada, the United States, Mexico and South America, is best known throughout the safety industry for its large-scale research and testing facility in Edmonton. Featuring a 93-meter railway trestle bridge, a fully operational construction crane and a 22-meter high steel structure, it is the only facility of its kind in the world. The 100 percent scale structures are used for research and development of related fall protection products and systems.

"A major avenue to avoid workplace injuries and mishaps is through proper and thorough worker training," Mr. Ryan said. "Surety's Research Centre is the perfect complement to Rose's highly regarded Safety at Heights training program. By combining these resources, we're able to provide unmatched technical support and ultimately move closer to our mission of improving worker safety throughout the world."

Established in 1975, Surety helps protect workers from falls with a 5,000- item inventory of fall protection, confined space, cargo control and rescue products. The company manufactures harnesses, custom rope products, lanyards, shock absorbers, horizontal and vertical lifeline systems and retractable lifelines and has dedicated significant resources to providing customized fall protection systems and training.

MSA, established in 1914, is the world's leading provider of quality products and services that protect people's health and safety and the environment. The company has annual sales of approximately \$500 million, with manufacturing operations throughout the United States and 29 international affiliates.

SOURCE Mine Safety Appliances Company

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