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Brick Provides Excellent Return on Investment for Homeowners

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. — Even when faced with a struggling economy and the ongoing challenges of a fluctuating market, brick remains the top choice for appearance and durability – while providing the highest return on investment. **General Shale**, the North American subsidiary of Wienerberger AG and a leading manufacturer of brick, one of the world’s oldest green building materials, remains true to its commitment to its core product, which has been the foundation of the company’s success for 84 years.

As new ideas such as outdoor living areas, thin brick walls and creative architectural features become standard in American homes, General Shale offers these items alongside its mainstay.

Research suggests that 60 percent of the nation’s homebuyers prefer brick. With U.S. housing starts for the first quarter of 2012 up 19 percent from the same period in 2011, General Shale stands ready to meet rising demands in a recovering economy – for brick as well as other construction and masonry supplies and a complete line of outdoor living, stone and brick veneer products.

“We are proud to offer products that provide great value for the investment, especially in today’s market,” says General Shale President and CEO Dick Green. “While styles and trends change, brick has proven its worth in appearance, low maintenance and durability – in ways that no other exterior building product can match.”

The use of fired clay brick as a primary building material in North America can be traced back hundreds of years – to the time before the United States became an independent nation. The popularity of brick is based on a number of factors, including its “green” characteristics, its classic good looks and lasting value.

Homeowners have found that although costs for the initial outlay for brick may exceed that of some other exterior building materials, the benefits outweigh the extra expenditure. Brick is superior in resisting fire and various elements of Mother Nature. It does not rot, dent or need to be painted; it will not be eaten by termites and will never tear. Available in a variety of colors and sizes, it complements almost all architectural styles and is one of the few building materials that can actually look better with age.



General Shale

Building The American Dream®

Buildings made of brick have a higher investment value than those made of other materials; they also typically sell faster and bring a higher resale price. The thermal mass properties of brick – that is, its ability to store heat – translate to lower heating and cooling costs for the user. Over the life of a mortgage, brick can save homeowners thousands of dollars – a significant consideration for modern families seeking ways to stretch their income.

About General Shale

General Shale is America's largest brick, stone and concrete block manufacturer, supplying a wide variety of masonry materials for residential, commercial and specialty architectural projects. These materials include brick, thin veneers, stone, outdoor living kits and various building materials. There are more than 250 distinct combinations of sizes, colors and textures to complete any building project. With a life cycle of more than 100 years, the sustainability of brick is the company's commitment to responsible stewardship.

Throughout the U.S. and Canada, General Shale operates manufacturing facilities in nine states and provinces, in addition to a network of 32 distribution centers across the country. General Shale was founded in 1928 and is headquartered in Johnson City, Tenn. For more information, visit www.generalshale.com.

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