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CONTACT: Carrie McChesney  
(888) 929-6207

## **THE FUTURE OF PLUMBING IS GREEN: GREENPLUMBERS® WORKSHOPS DEBUT IN CALIFORNIA**

SACRAMENTO, CA: The amount of water on planet Earth has not changed in the last two billion years – but in the last century, water use increased at twice the rate of the world population. The United States flushes 6.8 billion gallons of water down the toilet every day, while more than half of our states anticipate freshwater shortages in the next 10 years.

These are just a few of the facts plumbers learned when they attended one of the workshops held in California this fall to introduce the new *GreenPlumbers*® program. The program, which originated in Australia in 2001, is giving plumbers a new image – and a new mission.

“Plumbers have long held their mission to be protecting the health of the country,” said Stephen Lehtonen, spokesperson for *GreenPlumbersUSA*. “Because of climate change and global warming, our new mission is to protect the resources of the planet by training plumbers to be advocates and educators in environmental protection and conservation.”

Lehtonen facilitated a 15-year agreement that allows the enormously successful and effective *GreenPlumbers*® training program of Australia to be implemented in the United States.

“*GreenPlumbers*® is an accreditation program that trains plumbers in water conservation and climate care issues,” Lehtonen said. “The program is designed to help save water and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” Intended as a comprehensive industry response to climate and water care issues, the program is open to all plumbers, regardless of affiliation or association membership.

GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> has developed a five-course accreditation that totals 32 hours of training. The courses are Climate Care, Caring For Our Water, Solar Hot Water, Water-Efficient Technology, and Inspection Report Service. Training workshops debuted in California this fall. The response from attending plumbers and contractors has been very positive. After being trained in Caring for Our Water and Climate Care classes, attendees commented: “Very overdue education. Thank God it’s here now,” and, “Conserving water and utilizing the new technology will help save my clients money and build my company’s reputation.”

The response from government agencies and conservation groups has also been enthusiastic. “This is a great idea,” said Karen Morvay, water conservation specialist at the Santa Clara Valley Water District. “With the direct contact plumbers make each day with residents, I can’t imagine a better spokesperson for energy and water use efficiency.”

The average family of four uses 150,000 gallons of water every year; the toilet alone uses 30,000 gallons. Using a high-efficiency toilet (HET) can save up to 4,000 gallons per year. “An army of accredited GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> can make a measurable, significant difference in energy and resource consumption,” said Lehtonen. “Once the GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> concept is known among consumers, they will prefer, and demand, a Green Plumber, not only to save them money but to protect our environment.”

The Australian model, upon which GreenPlumbersUSA is based, has been successful in reaching that goal. Since implementation of the program in 2001, more than 5,000 Green Plumbers have been accredited, representing more than 2,300 businesses throughout Australia. Water consumption in Australia has been reduced up to 50% from 1990 levels.

The goal for 2008 in the United States is to train at least 8,000 Green Plumbers. A GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> accreditation license for contractors supports and protects the integrity of the brand. “In the next 10 years we plan to train 15,000 green plumbers in California and 40,000 nationally,” Lehtonen said. “We want to make the training free and available to all plumbers.” The GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> Training and Accreditation program is run by the Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors of California (PHCC) Education Foundation, a

nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. While eligible for grants and donations, its primary workshop funding sources are government agencies, utilities and manufacturers.

GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> has partnered with conservation groups, including the Alliance for Water Efficiency. The Alliance's executive director, Mary Ann Dickinson, said, "The Alliance for Water Efficiency is pleased to be part of the GreenPlumbersUSA program. This national partnership with GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> will multiply the efforts of both organizations and yield tremendous results for water and energy conservation in the United States."

GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> workshops are open to all C-36 contractors and plumbers.

To learn more about GreenPlumbers<sup>®</sup> go to [www.greenplumbersusa.com](http://www.greenplumbersusa.com) or call (888)929-6207.

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