

James Hardie Introduces Artisan® Lap, A New Line of Architectural Grade Building Material for Luxury Housing

Innovative and high quality, Artisan delivers stunning looks and structural integrity

MISSION VIEJO, Calif. (Aug. 1, 2007) – James Hardie Building Products (NYSE: JHX), the world's leading manufacturer of fiber-cement building materials, announces the launch of Artisan® Lap, the only architectural grade exterior design cladding with stunning looks and structural integrity. New Artisan Lap is now available in the Atlanta region.

Builders, architects and luxury homebuyers can view Artisan Lap for the first time at the 2007 *Southern Living* Idea House now through Nov. 25. The Idea House is located at Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro, Ga., about 75 miles east of Atlanta.

Backed by 15 years of research and development, Artisan Lap was designed for discriminating homebuyers and builders who seek the highest quality. Artisan delivers distinctively deep shadow lines for the look of cedar. Artisan Lap features the patented DuraTech™ technology for superior structural integrity. Artisan Lap also features tongue-and-groove end joints to fit tightly together for precise fit and finish.

Artisan Lap arrives ready to paint and is currently available in smooth surface. Along with builder-preferred 5/8" thick planks, product specifications include 12-foot lengths, offered in three widths: 5 1/4", 7 1/4" and 8 1/4". Like all other James Hardie® products, Artisan Lap is resistant to fire, water damage, insects and harsh weather. Artisan Lap comes complete with a 30-year limited warranty.

"While similar in appearance to high-end cedar, Artisan Lap requires less maintenance, and it offers greater protection against rotting, cracking and damage from inclement weather," said P.J. Rosch, Senior Product Manager for James Hardie Building Products. "Through our patented DuraTech technology, Artisan provides both superior structural integrity and beautiful precision, ensuring that builders, architects and homebuyers do not have to compromise on anything – appearance, materials, quality or durability."

Renowned designer Marianne Cusato, known for her work on the Lowe's Katrina Cottages, believes Artisan Lap is what the high-end housing market has been missing.

"Artisan provides the perfect combination of fine detail and durability," said Cusato. "From a design aspect, Artisan Lap is ideal for homeowners and builders who want a distinctive home."

Currently Artisan Lap is only available in the Atlanta market, with further regional introductions to follow. For more information about Artisan including availability and pricing, call 678.485.0794. For more information about James Hardie, visit www.jameshardie.com.

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About James Hardie:

James Hardie Building Products (NYSE: JHX) is committed to helping builders by providing innovative solutions that ultimately increase home value. As the world's leading manufacturer of fiber-cement building materials, James Hardie has been manufacturing cement-based building products for more than 100 years. It introduced fiber-cement products to the U.S. in the early 90s as a durable, low-maintenance alternative to wood and vinyl. Due to their resistance to wind, fire, impact and flood, James Hardie products also have been specified for homes in hurricane- and wildfire-prone areas throughout the U.S. Currently installed on over four million homes, James Hardie products have earned a favorable reputation within the industry and have been specified in some of the country's most prestigious projects.

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