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## **General Shale Announces Acquisition of Columbus Brick Company**

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. — General Shale, a leading U.S. manufacturer of brick, today announced that it has acquired Columbus Brick Company, a family-owned manufacturer located in Columbus, Mississippi.

The acquisition adds a robust portfolio to General Shale's extensive masonry lines, and expands the company's presence into new geographic areas yielding high levels of brick wall share.

"Along with introducing a unique, premium brick line into General Shale's product offerings, Columbus Brick Company brings a well-cultivated customer base that spans 18 states," says Charles Smith, president and CEO of General Shale. "Columbus Brick delivers a long track record of high-quality products, as well as distribution channels that ideally complement our own delivery system. The acquisition provides General Shale with the opportunity to increase our U.S. footprint through additional locations in the Midwest and South, and we are excited to bring this outstanding company under our umbrella."

Columbus Brick Company is a family-owned, fourth-generation company that manufactures a variety of face bricks and custom shapes in a broad range of colors, textures and styles for residential and commercial applications. Established in 1890, the company is the only U.S. brick manufacturer to offer genuine paper cut brick. Columbus Brick can manufacture a maximum of 140 million brick units annually and employs 75 individuals.

Going forward, Columbus Brick Company will retain its name as a subsidiary of General Shale and fall under the leadership of Charles Smith. Al Puckett, Columbus Brick's former CEO, will serve the company in an advisory capacity, and Ed Thebaud, general manager, will continue to oversee day-to-day operations.

Headquartered in Johnson City, Tennessee, General Shale is the North American subsidiary of Wienerberger AG of Vienna, Austria, the world's largest brick manufacturer. The company is one of the largest North American brick, stone and concrete block manufacturers. With a sizeable network of sales facilities, retail showrooms and affiliate distributors, General Shale is present in more than 15 states and provinces throughout North America. The company was founded in 1928 and currently employs 1,270 individuals.

“This acquisition demonstrates General Shale’s commitment to advancing our mission, which is to remain the preferred solutions provider of building materials in North America,” Smith says. “It also ensures Columbus Brick’s exceptional masonry products will remain in the marketplace for many more years to come. Both companies are committed to maintaining our solid customer and distributor relationships, and we will continue to support those relationships going forward.”

#### **ABOUT GENERAL SHALE**

General Shale is one of North America’s largest brick, stone and concrete block manufacturers. Founded in 1928, the company offers an endless array of sizes, colors and textures in a wide variety of masonry materials to complete any residential, commercial or specialty architectural project. These materials include brick, thin masonry, stone, outdoor living products, concrete block and various building materials, which include Arriscraft® Stone and Pipelife Jet Stream products.

Throughout the U.S. and Canada, General Shale operates sales and manufacturing facilities in 15 states and provinces, in addition to a network of 31 retail showrooms and more than 300 affiliated distributors across North America. The company grew even stronger in 1999 when it joined Wienerberger AG of Vienna, Austria, the world’s largest brick manufacturer. With a life cycle of more than 100 years, the sustainability of brick is General Shale’s commitment to responsible stewardship.

General Shale is headquartered in Johnson City, Tennessee. For more information, visit [www.generalshale.com](http://www.generalshale.com).