



A **Newell Rubbermaid** Brand

*For Immediate Release*

## **IRWIN TOOLS LAUNCHES WAKE-UP CALL ABOUT TRADESMEN SHORTAGE WITH MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN**

Awareness Effort Culminates on National Tradesmen Day, September 20<sup>th</sup>

HUNTERSVILLE, N.C. (August 26, 2013) — As America's skilled workforce ages, along with the country's infrastructure, too few skilled tradesmen are available to ensure that the nation's home building, industrial construction and maintenance needs are met. IRWIN Tools is sending a wake-up call with a multi-million dollar campaign to advocate for America's tradesmen and to encourage men and women to consider careers in the skilled trades.

The advertising and public relations efforts, set to begin in August, lead up to the third annual National Tradesmen Day on Friday, September 20, 2013. The nationwide initiative will include TV and digital advertising, media outreach, activation at retail home centers and hardware stores, and jobsite events.

The national TV advertising campaign highlights IRWIN's 185-year heritage of providing professional tools to professional tradesmen and invites the nation to say "thanks" on National Tradesmen Day. The four week campaign will air more than 2,400 times and is expected to reach almost 75 percent of IRWIN's target market. As a key television sponsor for the IRWIN Tools Night Race, the spot aired during the race broadcast on August 24, and will appear in highly-targeted programming on networks including ESPN, Discovery, History, Spike, FX, CMT, NBC Sports and The Weather Channel.

Beyond the messages of "thanks," IRWIN wants people to consider careers in the skilled trades. Young people, especially, have noticed that manual labor is devalued in our culture and because of that stigma, in part, they no longer consider a career in the trades. While new housing starts in April surged to a five-year high, according to the Commerce Department, we still must address the troubling trend that only one skilled worker is entering the workforce for every three who are retiring or leaving these professions. Without an adequate supply of tradesmen, who will meet this growing demand and fuel the housing recovery and our longer term housing needs? IRWIN Tools is leading the campaign to change attitudes about the skilled trades so we can build America and keep it running strong.

According to Rich Mathews, Senior Vice President of Marketing for IRWIN Tools, "There was a time when tradesmen were revered for their pioneering spirit, but many of today's tradesmen are under-appreciated. National Tradesmen Day is about acknowledging the plumbers, welders, builders, electricians and those who work with their hands. Let's thank them for their contributions."

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To acknowledge the invaluable contributions of trade professionals, [IRWIN Tools](#) initiated National Tradesmen Day in 2011.

### **“Appreciation Events” Complement Media Campaign**

IRWIN associates and their retail partners plan to thank tradesmen across the country on National Tradesmen Day — Friday, September 20, 2013. IRWIN will conduct events and provide many tradesmen with free products and other gifts from IRWIN as a token of appreciation. One such event will take place at in the Freedom Tower in New York City. IRWIN employees will greet and thank the tradesmen who built the newest addition to New York City’s skyline. Other appreciation events will take place that day at hundreds of jobsites nationwide, including in Chicago and Charlotte.

“IRWIN Tools is committed to starting a national dialogue about the skills gap. We need people to consider a career in the trades so we have tradesmen to build our cities and repair our infrastructure,” said Mathews.

For information on National Tradesmen Day or ideas about how you can recognize tradesmen in your community, visit [www.nationaltradesmenday.com](http://www.nationaltradesmenday.com) or <http://www.facebook.com/nationaltradesmenday>.

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### **About IRWIN Tools**

IRWIN Tools manufactures and distributes a broad line of hand tools and power tool accessories under the IRWIN® brand including VISE-GRIP® pliers and wrenches, MARATHON® saw blades, QUICK-GRIP® clamping tools, SPEEDBOR® wood drilling bits, STRAIT-LINE® marking tools, UNIBIT® step drill bits, MARPLES® fine woodworking tools, and HANSON® taps and dies. IRWIN Tools is a part of Newell Rubbermaid’s global portfolio of leading brands. For more information, call 1-800-GO-IRWIN or visit [www.irwin.com](http://www.irwin.com). IRWIN invites the nation to celebrate **National Tradesmen Day, on Sept. 20, 2013.**

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