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**St. Louis-based Western Waterproofing Company  
Celebrating 100th Anniversary with New Name, Brand and Logo**

(St. Louis, MO, May 17, 2015) - The year was 1915, and the President of the United States was Woodrow Wilson. Gasoline was 19 cents per gallon, and the Boston Red Sox defeated the Philadelphia Phillies four games to one in the World Series. America was facing uncertain times as it was being drawn into a war waging in Europe that would inevitably become World War I. Against the odds, entrepreneurs Ben Many and his brother-in-law George Bishop, Sr. started a fledgling basement waterproofing business in St. Louis, MO that they named the Western Waterproofing Company. A century later, that company would grow to become the nation's largest specialty contractor in building restoration and preservation.

Owned and operated by third generation family members, Western celebrated its momentous 100th Anniversary on May 16 with an extravagant cocktail reception and gala at the historic St. Louis Union Station in Downtown St. Louis. To mark the occasion, Western unveiled its new name, logo and tagline to the nation. Today, Western and its 30+ branches and member companies, which had been doing business under their original names (Western Waterproofing Company, Brisk Waterproofing, Peoria Roofing, Western Facades and Harry S. Peterson Co.), will be known as Western Specialty Contractors - *Confidence Through Performance*.

"In the past, Western was mainly perceived as a waterproofing company due to its extensive experience in waterproofing. But as Western evolved over its 100-year-history and branched out, we want to increase awareness of a larger breadth of services to a wider variety of industries that current and potential customers may not necessarily be aware of. In order to broaden our exposure in the industry and provide customers with a clearer, more concise understanding of our combined capabilities, we

have embarked on a major rebranding effort to mark our 100th Anniversary," said Western CEO, Benjamin Bishop, Jr.

Western's new logo is an evolution of the former logo, keeping the Western name and a refreshed water drop icon with an updated blue color. A website and video highlighting the 100th anniversary and rebranding efforts have also been developed.

Although the company's name and logo may have modified, its dedication to quality service, employee safety and family values have remained as constant as when the company was founded 100 years ago by Many and Bishop.

*"Good People, working hard together to service our customers' interests, add up to continuing success."*

**- Co Founders Ben Many and George Bishop, Sr.**

Through a willingness to adapt to changing times, Western has navigated through some of the country's most turbulent decades including two World Wars, the Great Depression and multiple recessions.

It all started in 1915, when the Ironite Company of Chicago invented a cost-saving product to waterproof concrete foundations from the inside called "Ironite" and were in need of contractors to successfully apply the product. The customary process for waterproofing basements and foundations at the time was expensive and time-consuming, requiring that the walls around the foundation be dug out, a membrane applied and fill-dirt put back in. Ironite was simply applied to the inside of the basement walls with a brush.

Ben Many jumped on the opportunity and convinced the Ironite Company to give him exclusive rights to the product, and in return, Many would help grow the business. Ben Many hired his brother-in-law George Bishop, Sr. to be his partner after Bishop returned from serving in World War I.

The duo successfully expanded the company for nearly two decades, taking advantage of a boom in new high-rise construction and their deep foundations. In 1929, however, the young company would struggle to survive as the Great Depression took hold of the nation. The nation's unemployment rate reached

25% and new construction practically stopped. Western was in debt, and Many moved to Chicago to pursue other interests, leaving Bishop to run the company.

Bishop diligently worked to rebuild the company, focusing on paying off debts and providing quality service. Bishop relied on a group of dedicated employees who agreed to take less and sporadic pay to help build the business back up. The Western Waterproofing name began regaining respect from bankers, bonding companies and customers.

Western held its strength during World War II and continued on a pattern of growth. Several family members joined the business over the decades and expanded Western's reach and service offerings to also include specialty roofing, masonry and concrete restoration, and above-grade masonry cleaning. Between 1926 and 2008, Western acquired seven companies and opened 30+ branches across the nation.

"Over the years, Western has earned a nationwide reputation for finding solutions to some of our customer's most challenging problems. Our breadth of industries served has also expanded from initially basements to commercial, institutional, governmental and industrial buildings of all sizes and ages, as well as sports stadiums and multi-level parking structures," said Western President, Jeff Kelley. "We have the know-how, the experience and the dedicated employees to get the job done right, with safety always a top priority."

In 2014, Western proudly achieved a .55 Experience Modification Rating (EMR) and an OSHA Total Recordable rate of 2.73 - both safety ratings are well below industry averages and extremely difficult to attain. Western employees often work hundreds of feet in the air on scaffolds, in crumbling parking garages and perched atop precarious structures and roofs. Western attributes its world-class safety ratings to its stringent, ongoing safety training, regular job-site safety reviews, tough discipline and "no excuse for not working safely" company culture.

"Our top priority is ensuring that each of our employees returns home safely to their families each night," Kelley said.

Some of the landmark buildings that Western has worked on during its 100-year-history include:

- Harbor Towers - Boston, MA
- Woolworth Building - New York, NY
- Chrysler Building - New York, NY
- King of Prussia Mall - King of Prussia, PA
- United States Capitol - Washington, DC
- Parthenon - Nashville, TN
- Field Museum of Natural History - Chicago, IL
- Biltmore Conservatory - Asheville, NC
- Rose Bowl Stadium - Pasadena, CA
- Packard Automotive Plant - Detroit, MI
- National Gallery of Art - Washington, D.C.
- Busch Stadium - St. Louis, MO
- Truman Sports Complex - Kansas City, MO
- Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool - Washington, D.C.
- Ford Motor Company Twin Cities Assembly Plant - St. Paul, MN
- Mazza Castle - Pacifica, CA
- Disney World's Epcot Center - Orlando, FL

Bishop, Jr. said he is proud of the company's longstanding history and is looking forward to embracing new technologies and challenges, just as its founders did.

"We have proven throughout history that strong leadership, a willingness to adapt to changing times and hard-working, committed employees are the keys to success," said Bishop, Jr. "The founders and their families have set a strong foundation for the company, and learned some hard lessons along the way. Today we honor their legacy and strive for continued success in their names."

### **About Western Specialty Contractors**

Family-owned and operated for nearly 100 years, Western Specialty Contractors is the nation's largest specialty contractor in masonry and concrete restoration, waterproofing and specialty roofing. Offering a nationwide network of expertise, building owners, engineers, architects and property managers can count on Western to develop cost-effective, corrective measures that can add years of useful life to

industrial, commercial, healthcare, historic, educational and government buildings, parking structures and sports stadiums. Western is headquartered in St. Louis, MO with over 30 branch offices nationwide and employs more than 1,200 salaried and hourly professionals who offer the best, time-tested techniques and innovative technology. For more information about Western Specialty Contractors, visit [www.westernspecialtycontractors.com](http://www.westernspecialtycontractors.com).

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