Smith & Wesson Begins Shipping M&P45 Polymer Pistols

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SPRINGFIELD, Mass., May 14 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation (Nasdaq: SWHC), parent company of Smith & Wesson Corp., the legendary 155-year old company in the global business of safety, security, protection and sport, announced today that it has begun shipping the M&P45, the .45 caliber version of the company's Military & Police (M&P) Series of advanced design polymer pistols.

First introduced by the company in February at the 2007 SHOT Show, the M&P45 is the newest addition to the M&P Pistol Series, a product line launched in December 2005. The M&P series offers performance, safety, and durability features engineered to the exacting standards of global law enforcement and military personnel. The full-size polymer pistol is chambered in .45 ACP and will ship with a 10+1 magazine capacity. An optional 14+1 magazine capacity will also be available.

"The addition of our M&P45 allows us to provide a broad portfolio of high-performance polymer pistols to military organizations, law enforcement agencies, sports shooters and consumers desiring personal protection," said Leland Nichols, President and Chief Operating Officer of Smith & Wesson Corp., a wholly owned subsidiary of Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation. "By combining the powerful .45 ACP cartridge with the performance and safety features of the M&P series, working professionals and shooting sports enthusiasts have a new option in the growing line of M&P products well-suited to fulfill a wide variety of needs."

Nichols continued, "We are also aware that multiple branches of the U.S. Military have expressed a desire to shift from their current 9mm weapons to either a .40 or .45 caliber duty weapon for greater stopping power. We are now currently shipping both .40 and .45 calibers, as well as a 9mm, in the M&P Pistol Series, and are fully prepared to address either requirement, should the U.S. Military initiate a request for purchase."

The M&P45 is available with a traditional black frame and is manufactured with or without a frame-mounted ambidextrous thumb safety. The M&P45 will also be available this summer with a dark earth brown frame and a standard manual thumb safety. Both models feature a 4.5-inch barrel with an overall length of 8.05 inches. Featuring one of the smallest grip sizes available on any .45 ACP pistol, the M&P45 comes standard with three interchangeable grips, allowing the user to customize the pistol to their preference. The M&P45 utilizes a steel dovetail mount front sight and a steel Novak(R) Lo-Mount carry rear sight. Tritium sights are also available for low light conditions. A universal Picatinny-style equipment rail has been incorporated for tactical lights and lasers. The polymer pistol has an empty weight of 29.6 ounces.

The new frame-mounted ambidextrous thumb safety acts as a passive safety device allowing the slide to be pulled toward the rear, clearing the firearm without disengaging the safety. Another feature available on both the black frame and dark earth brown frame pistol is the specially designed lanyard attachment. All M&P45 pistols feature a Zytel(R) polymer frame reinforced with a rigid stainless steel chassis and a through-hardened black melonite finished stainless steel barrel and slide for durability; a passive trigger safety to prevent the pistol from firing if dropped; and a sear release lever that eliminates the need to press the trigger in order to disassemble the firearm. A loaded chamber indicator is located on top of the slide. The firearm also features an ambidextrous slide stop and a reversible magazine release, as well as an enlarged trigger guard designed to accommodate gloves. The Smith & Wesson lifetime service policy is standard with each pistol.

About Smith & Wesson

Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation, a global leader in safety, security, protection and sport, is parent company to Smith & Wesson Corp., one of the world's largest manufacturers of quality firearms and firearm safety/security products and parent company to Thompson/Center Arms, Inc., a premier designer and manufacturer of premium hunting rifles, black powder rifles, interchangeable firearms systems and accessories under the Thompson/Center brand. Smith & Wesson licenses shooter protection, knives, apparel, and other accessory lines. Smith & Wesson is based in Springfield, Massachusetts with manufacturing facilities in Springfield, Houlton, Maine, and Rochester, New Hampshire. The Smith & Wesson Academy is America's longest running firearms training facility for law enforcement, military and security professionals. For more information on Smith & Wesson, call (800) 331-0852 or log on to www.smith-wesson.com. For more information on Thompson/Center Arms, log on to www.tcarms.com.

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