

Kawasaki Announces Major Personnel Moves at Engines and Power Products Division

Kent Murakami, longtime G.M., will retire and be replaced by KMM's Yoshiteru Ueda; Ohno, Howe, and Lockyear broaden responsibilities

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Oct. 8 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Katsuyuki (Kent) Murakami, general manager of Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A.'s Engines and Power Products Division based here, announced that he will retire effective the end of this year. He will be replaced by Yoshiteru (Yoshi) Ueda, who headed the research and development program at Kawasaki Motors Manufacturing Corp., U.S.A.'s Maryville, Mo. production facility. Ueda has been with Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. since 1972.

Murakami, who joined Kawasaki in 1965, has overseen the growth of operations in Grand Rapids since 1995. Under his management, Kawasaki has broadened its industry presence in numerous areas, including an expansion of engine offerings that now includes three dozen powerplants suitable for a wide range of commercial applications. The Kawasaki-branded handheld power products catalogue has grown to include 32 units serving commercial landscaping needs with string trimmers, blowers, hedge trimmers, hedge clippers, and edgers.

Kawasaki services customers through a network of over 8,000 independent dealers in the U.S. and Canada.

According to Murakami, "Kawasaki is now well positioned for continued success and I'm very pleased to have been an integral part of growing the division from its early stages to where it now plays a significant role in all facets of our industry."

During Murakami's tenure, the company also made major strides in environmental support areas, including the incorporation of DFI technology and an acceptance of propane fuel conversion technology for its engines.

Ueda will relocate to Grand Rapids as of early November and will work with Murakami in a transition period through the end of the year.

Assuming a new position as Deputy General Manager is Fumihiro (Clint) Ohno, a veteran Kawasaki executive who will work closely with the new G.M. in helping to manage the growing organization. Ohno, who most recently held the title of Assistant to General Manager for Sales and Marketing, will focus considerable efforts in overseeing the components of the company's financial and accounting practices.

Rodger Howe, a Kawasaki executive since 1987, and most recently the Director of Dealer Channel Sales and Marketing, becomes Director, Operations, with responsibilities for all divisional activities with the exception of OEM

sales. Howe will manage all marketing and communications activities, field sales, sales administration, product specialists, and sales services.

Randy Lockyear has been promoted to Senior OEM Sales Manager, responsible for coordinating the activities of the OEM sales team which has significantly broadened Kawasaki's impact in this category.

Kawasaki Engines and Power Products, a division of Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A., distributes gasoline engines and professional handheld power products for landscape, industrial, and consumer markets. The division is headquartered in Grand Rapids, Mich., and services customers through its network of over 8,000 independent dealers throughout the United States and Canada.

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