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### **Earp Distribution to remain in Wyandotte County**

Kansas City, KS – Wyandotte County's family-owned and operated Earp Distribution will move into a new, larger facility in Edwardsville in January 2011. Earp Distribution, the sole wholesale provider of foods and goods to approximately 450 McDonald's and Chipotle Mexican Grills in the Midwest, will break ground on their new location during the first quarter of 2010. The move to build a larger facility will allow Earp to increase efficiencies and accommodate a growing employee base.

Earp Distribution was founded in 1954 by Don and Marie Earp as a fresh meat supplier to wholesale accounts, including restaurants, hotels, schools and hospitals. In 1962, the company began selling to McDonald's restaurants and now, under the direction of grandsons and current owner/operators, Cliff Earp and Steve Hewlett, provides local McDonald's and Chipotle chains with products from thousands of vendors, ranging from Coke products and meat to paper supplies and register tape.

Working with WYEDC to make the deal a success was Grubb & Ellis | The Winbury Group, acting broker for Earp Distribution. Agents Ed Elder and Doug Hedrick worked with Earp to find the best fit for their growing company in addition to working closely with the government entities to find the best scenario for all involved. "It was an incredibly thorough process and will represent one of the very few industrial build to suits projects in Kansas City market for 2010," said Elder.

"Selecting a new location for our family's operations was a long and much debated process; we have been working with Brent Miles of WYEDC the entire time and his input was vital for this endeavor," said Cliff Earp. "We thought we wanted to stay in Wyandotte County, but working with the economic development team that included the City of Edwardsville, WYEDC, the Unified Government and the Kansas Department of Commerce really convinced us of that. Working with these economic partners was a critical step in our relocating initiative. Our comfort level working with Mayor McTaggart and Edwardsville City Administrator Mike Webb was important to us."

The new Edwardsville facility is planned for the corner of Woodend Road and 98<sup>th</sup> Street and will encompass 23 acres with a 160,000 square-foot warehouse and corporate office facility. The project cost is estimated between \$23-26 million and will be financed by Wells Fargo Financial.

"We are excited to welcome Earp Distribution to Edwardsville; we know there is no better place for their business than our city," said City of Edwardsville's Mayor McTaggart. "We are confident that they will benefit from the business advantages of our town, such as our great transportation network."

"This is another great success for Wyandotte County," said Kansas Department of Commerce Secretary Bill Thornton. "The opportunity to retain a quality company such as Earp Distribution represents the tireless efforts of so many in the county, as well as the pride, integrity and work ethic of Kansas workers, who continue to be one of the county's best assets."

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*Wyandotte Economic Development Council (WYEDC) is a non-profit economic development corporation whose mission is to promote and strengthen Wyandotte County's economy through innovative approaches to programs, partnerships, and leadership in industrial, residential, office, and retail markets.*

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