



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SMARTEC™ BY HYDRO-GEAR PROVIDES
“TOTAL PACKAGE” SOLUTION FOR HUSTLER ZEON™**

HESSTON, KS (Oct. '08) – Excel Industries, Hustler Turf Equipment is introducing the world's first all-electric, zero-turn riding mower – the Hustler Zeon. Powered by battery, the Zeon has set the stage to change the way things in the lawn care industry get done. Support comes from an all-inclusive set of electric components from Smartec™ by Hydro-Gear.

In the past, manufacturers like Hustler Turf Equipment had to seek out each individual piece of the puzzle that creates a mower. Engines, drive motors, cutting systems and other parts were selected from an array of sources and made to work together. Smartec™ has completely reversed that approach. In the Zeon, most everything that makes the mower move and cut is united in one electric system by Smartec™.

“This is the first time an OEM has been able to rely on a single solution instead of shopping around,” said Mike Kernan, Hydro-Gear Brand Manager. This integrated approach is an advantage users will appreciate as well. “The cutting and drive systems work together for enhanced energy management, safety and convenience, in addition to cut and drive performance,” said Kernan.

Those who choose to switch from gas to electric stand a lot to gain. The Zeon performs as well as, and in many cases above the quality-of-cut level of its gas-powered counterparts. With Smartec™, the Zeon has the same power as gas-powered options, with consistency in flats or on hills. Smartec™ can even be ‘customized’ around various performance characteristics or safety elements since it is software-driven.

Economic and environmental advantages make the value of switching to electric even more evident. As Smartec™ eliminates gas, oil, filters and plugs with its all-electric format, all users have to do is start the Zeon up to mow, and plug it in to charge. No trips for expensive gas, oil or other maintenance expenses that other mowers require.

All this is in addition to the eco-friendly operation of the Zeon. Powered by renewable electrical energy, Smartec™ and the Zeon eliminate carbon emissions and greatly reduce both noise and air pollution. Those who switch to the all-electric Zeon will feel good about not just what it does, but also what it doesn't do.

Hydro-Gear has a strong background in new product development. “Hydro-Gear has always had a very strong innovation culture,” said Kernan. That culture has helped foster such a positive relationship between Hydro-Gear and Excel Industries, Hustler Turf Equipment. “Both Excel and Hydro-Gear are engineering-centric companies. Our organizations complement each other very well, as both take great pride in finding the best solutions possible.”

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About Hustler Turf Equipment and Excel Industries, Inc.

Founded in 1960 and based in Hesston, Kansas, Excel Industries is a leading manufacturer of premium commercial and residential lawn care equipment, marketed under the Hustler Turf Equipment brand. Excel introduced the world's first zero-turn mower in 1964, and today has a global distribution network of over 1,200 US dealers and 40 worldwide distributors.