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Immediate Release

Proud of your store? Prove it.
Enter Hardware Merchandising's Outstanding Retailer Awards Now

Toronto, ON (July 3, 2012) – Dealers have less than a month left to enter [Hardware Merchandising Magazine's 2012 Outstanding Retailer Awards \(ORAs\)](#), the industry's only independent awards program dedicated to celebrating the achievements of hardware, home improvement and building supply dealers in Canada.

There is no fee to enter and nominations are not required. Dealers may submit entries directly, or chain/buying group head offices may choose to prepare and submit the entries for them. This year's competition closes on Friday, August 3, 2012.

Complete information and entry forms are available at hardwaremagazine.ca/ORA.

Entries may be submitted two ways:

1. Print forms and mail with CD of images (hi-res jpegs required) to Lori Smith, Editor, Hardware Merchandising, 80 Valleybrook Drive, Toronto, Ontario, M3B 2S9.
2. Save forms to computer, complete them and place forms along with images in a folder marked with store name. Entries can be sent to lsmith@giftsandtablewares.ca via YouSendIt or Dropbox; or the folder can be placed on the ORAs' dedicated ftp site (email lsmith@giftsandtablewares.ca for instructions).

Once the entries are in, a panel of experts will judge them on the basis of sales growth, customer service, overall store appearance, marketing, merchandising, employee management and community involvement. The winners will receive their awards October 25th at the annual ORA Awards Gala, which is held on the opening evening of the Hardlines Conference in Toronto.

The 2012 edition offers awards in seven categories:

1. **Best Hardware Store** (any size)
2. **Best Building Supply/Home Centre** (over 25,000 square feet)
3. **Best Building Supply/Home Centre** (under 25,000 square feet)

4. **Best Large Surface Retailer** (over 50,000 square feet)
5. **Best Contractor-Specialist Dealer** (must do at least 60 percent of sales with contractors)
6. **Best Young Retailer** (a store manager under the age of 35; entrants may be owners or chain employees)
7. **Community Leader** (open to all stores of any size that have made an outstanding contribution to the community they serve through a special event, a selfless act, or ongoing involvement in the community over time)

In addition to the award itself, 2012 ORA winners will receive national coverage in the November/December 2012 issue of Hardware Merchandising as well as a marketing package that includes a press release ready to be sent to local media, a custom video and an ORA logo for use on their website.

Launched in 1992, the program has honoured more than 140 retailers in its 21-year history. Chris Galer, owner of Poco Building Supplies in Port Coquitlam, B.C. and 2011's Best Young Retailer, says that winning the ORA was "a nice acknowledgement from within our industry" of the steps he and his cousin, Jeff, have taken to move the family business forward. "It's also been a great starting point, specifically with other TimbrMart members, for discussions on what tools and strategies independent dealers can use to remain competitive in our market," he explains.

The ORAs are supported by the Western Retail Lumber Association (WRLA); Association québécoise de la quincaillerie et des matériaux de construction (AQMAT); the Building Supply Industry Association of BC (BSIA); the Lumber and Building Materials Association of Ontario (LBMAO); the Atlantic Building Supply Dealers Association (ABSDA); NRHA Canada; and Hardlines.

To view videos of the 2011 ORA-winning stores go to <http://www.hardwaremagazine.ca/videos/>

For more information on the ORA program contact Lori Smith, Editor, Hardware Merchandising; tel: 416.442.5600 ext. 3238; email: lsmith@hardwaremagazine.ca.