



## **News Release**

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### **Belk to Serve Customers from One Store at Turtle Creek Mall in Hattiesburg \$5.2 Million Renovation of Current Men's, Children's and Home Store Begins in May**

HATTIESBURG, MISS., Feb. 24, 2010 – Belk today announced that it is combining its two stores at Turtle Creek Mall into one totally renovated store in a move to create an updated new shopping environment that is more convenient and enjoyable for customers.

The consolidation and renovation project will be conducted in phases beginning in early May, with the grand reopening of the combined 120,000-square-foot store scheduled for October 10, 2010. The project represents an investment of approximately \$5.2 million for Belk.

Belk currently operates in two stores at the mall. The women's store that houses apparel, accessories, shoes and cosmetics is located in the former McRae's building adjacent to Sear's. The men's, children's and home store is in the former Gayfer's building located in the center of the mall facing Weathersby Road.

All departments will be consolidated into the Belk men's, children and home store building, which will be completely renovated to create an exciting new décor featuring new flooring, carpeting, ceilings, lighting and fixtures. New fitting rooms and restrooms are also part of the project. All associates employed at the current Belk locations will continue to serve customers from the combined location.

"Our customers have told us that they don't like the inconvenience of having to visit two stores to get their shopping done," said **Wayne Freeman**, store manager. "We've listened to their feedback and decided that we can serve them better by bringing all of our merchandise departments together under one roof. In addition, we are demonstrating our commitment to this community by investing in a major overhaul of the combined store that will create an exciting new shopping environment for our customers that will represent the best in retail interior design and decor.

"We want to communicate these changes to customers in advance and let them know that we will be making every effort to minimize any inconvenience caused by the construction work and department relocations that will be taking place over the next five and a half months. We appreciate the continued loyalty and patronage of our customers as we transition to an exciting new store that will allow us to better meet their shopping needs over the long term."

Freeman said the renovated store at Turtle Creek Mall will have an open design with a new layout and enhanced merchandise presentation that will make it easier for shoppers to find the merchandise they're looking for. The store will continue to feature the latest styles and assortments of top national merchandise brands and Belk's exclusive private brands for the whole family, including fashion apparel, shoes, accessories, cosmetics, a full-line home store, a Belk and Co. Fine Jewelers counter, and a Belk salon and spa.

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Belk has served the Hattiesburg community since 2005, when it acquired the McRae's department store group from Saks Incorporated.

**About Belk, Inc.**

Charlotte, N.C.-based Belk, Inc. is the nation's largest privately owned mainline department store company. It operates 305 Belk stores located in 16 Southern states. The company was founded in 1888 by William Henry Belk in Monroe, N.C., and is in the third generation of Belk family leadership. Its Belk.com Web site is designed with many special features to make online shopping exciting, convenient and easy for customers. It offers a wide assortment of fashion apparel, shoes and accessories for the entire family along with top name cosmetics, a wedding registry and a large selection of quality merchandise for the home.

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