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EANS-News: Wienerberger AG intends to increase payouts to shareholders

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No Keyword

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- New capital distribution policy provides for distribution of 20-40% of free cash flow to shareholders
- Balance sheet remains strong, providing headroom for enhanced capital returns and strategic growth projects
- Implementation of value-creating growth strategy fully on track
- Plans for further optimization of financing costs
- Outlook for 2019 confirmed

On the occasion of its Capital Markets Day, the Wienerberger Group, a leading international supplier of innovative solutions for the building envelope and smart infrastructure, announces a new capital distribution policy. The company intends to distribute 20-40% of the free cash flow to its shareholders in the form of dividends and share buybacks. Moreover, Wienerberger provides an update on the implementation of its value-creating growth strategy and confirms its outlook for EBITDA like-for-like for 2019 within a range of EUR 570-580 million. Wienerberger has made significant progress in implementing its Fast Forward program of performance enhancement measures and is therefore fully on track to achieve its target of a contribution to earnings of EUR 120 million in the period from 2018 to 2020.

To date, Wienerberger's distribution policy has been 10-30% of the free cash flow after deduction of the costs of hybrid capital. In the future, 20-40% of the free cash flow of the respective business year are to be distributed to the shareholders. "We are experiencing profitable growth and have most recently generated the best half-year result in the 200-year history of our company. We want our shareholders to benefit more strongly from this successful performance", says Chairman of the Managing Board Heimo Scheuch.

In implementing its corporate strategy, Wienerberger continues to focus on value-creating growth projects. Currently, the company is looking into attractive M&A projects with a view to broadening its offer of innovative products and services and strengthening its market presence. With its strong balance sheet, the Group has the necessary financial headroom for such strategic growth steps.

In terms of organic growth, Wienerberger is making strong progress in transforming its product and service portfolio. The company's objective is to further increase the percentage of premium products and smart solutions and to play a major role as an innovation leader in the digital transformation of the construction and infrastructure sectors. Wienerberger intends to explore growth opportunities in adjacent and new products to double its revenue share of the total value of the building envelope to 10% over the medium-term.

Moreover, Wienerberger specifies its CAPEX guidance on the occasion of the Capital Markets Day. Recurring maintenance investments are to be within a range of EUR 120 to 140 million on a sustainable basis, with investments of EUR 135 million anticipated for 2019. Discretionary growth investments aimed at strengthening the company's performance and supporting its strategic development will come to approximately EUR 120 million, including investments in capacity expansion, optimization and digitalization projects, as well as research and development.

Wienerberger's growth strategy is being implemented on the basis of strict financial discipline. Wienerberger will capitalize on the refinancing of a corporate bond maturing in 2020 and the call option for the hybrid bond in 2021 to further optimize the Group's financing costs.

Wienerberger Group

Wienerberger is the world's largest producer of bricks (Porotherm, Terca) and the market leader in clay roof tiles (Koramic, Tondach) in Europe as well as concrete pavers (Semmelrock) in Central and Eastern Europe. In pipe systems (Steinzeug-Keramo ceramic pipes and Pipelife plastic pipes), the company is one of the leading suppliers in Europe. With its total of 195 production sites, the Wienerberger Group generated revenues of EUR 3.3 billion and EBITDA of EUR 470 million in 2018.

Wienerberger AG is a pure free float company, whereby the majority of shares are held by Austrian and international institutional investors. Additional information on the shareholder structure is provided under <https://wienerberger.com/en/investors/share> [<https://wienerberger.com/en/investors/share>]

Further inquiry note:

Barbara Grohs, Head of Corporate Communications Wienerberger AG
t +43 664 828 31 39 | Barbara.Grohs@wienerberger.com

Klaus Ofner, Head of Investor Relations Wienerberger AG
t +43 1 601 92 - 10221 | investor@wienerberger.com

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issuer: Wienerberger AG
 Wienerbergerstraße 11
 A-1100 Wien
phone: +43 1 60 192-0
FAX: +43 1 60 192-10159
mail: office@wienerberger.at
WWW: www.wienerberger.at
ISIN: AT0000831706
indexes: ATX
stockmarkets: Wien
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