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The world famous Times Square ball goes greener with 32,000 LEDs from Philips Lighting!

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On December 31st, all eyes will be squarely focused on one of New York City's most well-known pieces of real estate - the top of One Times Square, from which the historic Times Square ball makes its famous descent every New Year's Eve to visually ring in the new year. Last year, in commemoration of its 100th anniversary, the ball received a landmark green makeover and was outfitted with 100% light emitting diode (LED) technology as its light source for the first time in its century-long history.

This year will be equally exciting, however, as the ball will celebrate a number of exciting new landmark and newsworthy developments. Doubled in size from 6 ft. to 12 ft. in diameter this year, the new Times Square ball will feature over 32,000 LEDs from Philips Lighting, more than three times the number on last year's ball. The result will be a brighter and more beautiful Times Square experience than ever before and a greener one at that, as the LEDs incorporated this year are as much as 20% more energy-efficient than the models used last year. In fact, the ball will require only as much energy per hour to operate as it takes to power just two conventional home ovens! Beautifully enhanced by over 2,600 specially-cut crystal panels from Waterford, the ball's high-power LED lights will deliver a color palette of over 16 million rich and vibrant hues and will enable the potential for billions of amazing special effects that were never before possible with the previous incandescent and halogen technology used in years past.

And in another new development, the new 2008-2009 ball will become more than just a New Year's Eve tradition. For the first time in its history, the ball will remain permanently perched atop One Times Square for year-round enjoyment, adding a beautiful new point of light to the New York City skyline while helping to celebrate major holidays throughout the year.

"For 100 years, the Times Square New Year's Eve Ball has attracted millions of revelers to Times Square on December 31st to celebrate the beginning of the New Year" says Jeff Straus, president of Countdown Entertainment and co-organizer of Times Square New Year's Eve. "The new Times Square New Year's Eve Ball will be a bright sparkling jewel atop One Times Square entertaining New Yorkers and tourists from around the world not only on December 31st, but all throughout the year."

The ball's new status as a year-round attraction will also serve as a continuous reminder of the beauty, power, and energy-efficiency of LED technology and will help to usher in a new era in high-performing and sustainable lighting technology around the world.

On behalf of Philips, we wish everyone a very happy and healthy holiday season and a wonderful, prosperous, and green 2009....happy new year to all!

Susan Bloom is director of corporate communications for Philips Lighting & Advance.

