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**AMCOL INTERNATIONAL (NYSE:ACO) REPORTS
35 PERCENT INCREASE IN DILUTED EARNINGS PER SHARE OVER 2005
FIRST QUARTER**

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, ILL., April 21, 2006—AMCOL International Corporation (NYSE:ACO) today reported 2006 first quarter net income of \$9.7 million or \$0.31 per diluted share, compared with \$7.0 million or \$0.23 per diluted share in the same prior-year period.

Net sales rose 17 percent to \$142.8 million for the quarter ended March 31, 2006, compared with \$122.1 million for the period in 2005. Operating profit grew over the 2005 first quarter by 46 percent to \$12.0 million.

This release should be read in conjunction with the attached unaudited condensed consolidated financial statements. Further discussion of items and events impacting earnings are included in the financial overview.

Larry Washow, AMCOL president and chief executive officer said, “The first quarter is always difficult to predict so we are very pleased with the results overall. We anticipated positive year-over-year comparisons with good growth in earnings, but further benefited from a dramatically improved Oilfield Services Group performance. By continuing to focus our resources on driving improvements in diversified targeted, global markets, we expect to continue to see the benefits in our earnings.”

Washow noted, “While the U.S. metalcasting business is not as robust as it has been in recent quarters, we continue to focus on expansion of that market globally, adding to our year-over-year minerals’ growth. As part of our Specialty Materials Group, detergents is still somewhat soft in the European market. However, we expect to gain from positive international developments in our detergent business as the year progresses. Not surprisingly our Petroleum Products sales are very strong. Our Pet Products Group is focusing on building sales momentum and improving margin structure.”

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“The first quarter is usually fairly modest for our environmental segment but this year the segment delivered very strong growth in operating profits of 51 percent, benefiting from the high demand for our oil related services and a strong, early European construction market. Our continued development of products and services within the segment’s markets has been an important driver providing growth in our Lining Technology, Building Materials and Oilfield Services Groups,” Washow commented.

Washow continued, “The majority of the general, selling and administrative spending increase is related to supporting growth in the environmental segment.”

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Operating Results

The Environmental segment accounted for approximately 62 percent of the sales growth in the first quarter. The Minerals and Transportation segments contributed approximately 32 and 6 percent, respectively.

Gross margin for the quarter was 25.0 percent compared with 24.3 percent in the prior-year first quarter. The Minerals segment gross margin improved by 30 basis points, while the Environmental segment remained constant and the Transportation segment declined by 40 basis points.

General, selling and administrative expenses were \$23.7 million in the 2006 first quarter, an increase of \$2.2 million or 10 percent over the 2005 period. The Environmental segment accounted for a majority of the increase over 2005, primarily due to higher personnel and product warranty expenses. Research and development expenses were approximately \$1.5 million in the first quarter of 2006.

Operating margin for the quarter was 8.4 percent compared with 6.7 percent in the prior-year period. Margins improved in all segments.

The Company’s effective tax rate was 28.9 percent for the first quarter of 2006 versus 19.1 percent for the same period in 2005. The 2006 quarter included additional expense for adjustments related to previously recorded tax liabilities. Excluding the adjustments, the tax rate would have been 27.7 percent. The 2005 tax rate was favorably impacted from changes in estimates of tax liabilities. Those adjustments added \$0.03 per diluted share to earnings in the first quarter of 2005.

Income from affiliates and joint ventures contributed approximately \$0.04 per diluted share in the 2006 first quarter compared with \$0.02 per diluted share in the prior-year period. Higher earnings from the Company’s India-based investments accounted for the increase over the 2005 first quarter results.

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The weighted average number of common and common equivalent shares was 30.9 million for the quarter ended March 31, 2006, compared with 30.8 million in the prior-year period.

Financial Position

Long-term debt amounted to \$47.7 million at March 31, 2006 compared to \$34.8 million at December 31, 2005. Debt represented 16 percent of total capitalization at March 31, 2006, compared to 12 percent at December 31, 2005. Cash and cash equivalents were \$13.5 million at March 31, 2006 compared with \$16.0 million at the end of 2005.

Working capital increased to \$161.1 million at March 31, 2006 from \$147.9 million at December 31, 2005, which also had the effect of increasing the current ratio to 3.9-to-1 versus 3.3-to-1.

Cash flow used in operating activities was \$4.0 million for the quarter ending March 31, 2006 as compared to \$2.7 million being provided in the prior-year period.

Capital expenditures amounted to \$9.3 million for the quarter ended March 31, 2006, compared with \$5.2 million for the same period in 2005.

During the first quarter of 2006, the Company repurchased 40 thousand shares of its common stock for \$1.1 million, or an average price of \$26.89 per share. \$7.0 million remains available in the stock repurchase program approved by the Board of Directors in May 2004.

This release contains certain forward-looking statements regarding AMCOL's expected performance for future periods and actual results for such periods might materially differ. Such forward-looking statements are subject to uncertainties, which include, but are not limited to, actual growth in AMCOL's various markets, utilization of AMCOL's plants, currency exchange rates, currency devaluation, delays in development, production and marketing of new products, integration of acquired businesses, and other factors detailed from time to time in AMCOL's annual report and other reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

AMCOL International, headquartered in Arlington Heights, Ill., produces and markets a wide range of specialty mineral products used for industrial, environmental and consumer-related applications. AMCOL is the parent of American Colloid Co., CETCO (Colloid Environmental Technologies Co.), Volclay International, Nanocor and the transportation operations, Ameri-co Carriers, Inc. and Ameri-co Logistics, Inc. AMCOL's common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol ACO. AMCOL's web address is www.amcol.com. AMCOL's first quarter conference call will be available live today at 11 a.m. EDT on the AMCOL website.

Financial tables follow.

AMCOL INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS

(unaudited)
(In thousands, except per share data)

	Three months ended March 31,	
	2006	2005
Net sales	\$ 142,764	\$ 122,050
Cost of sales	107,035	92,370
Gross profit	35,729	29,680
General, selling and administrative expenses	23,682	21,445
Operating profit	12,047	8,235
Other income (expense):		
Interest expense, net	(477)	(361)
Other, net	212	(105)
	(265)	(466)
Income before income taxes and income from affiliates and joint ventures	11,782	7,769
Income tax expense (benefit)	3,408	1,484
Income before income from affiliates and joint ventures	8,374	6,285
Income from affiliates and joint ventures	1,337	667
Net income	\$ 9,711	\$ 6,952
Weighted average common shares outstanding	29,773,953	29,333,627
Weighted average common and common equivalent shares outstanding	30,894,234	30,769,482
Basic earnings per share	\$ 0.33	\$ 0.24
Diluted earnings per share	\$ 0.31	\$ 0.23
Dividends declared per share	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.09

AMCOL INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS
(In thousands)

ASSETS	March 31, 2006 (unaudited)	December 31, 2005 *
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 13,449	\$ 15,997
Accounts receivable, net	111,529	101,725
Inventories	76,044	77,928
Prepaid expenses	7,028	6,595
Income taxes receivable	3,478	3,698
Current deferred tax assets	4,334	4,864
Assets held for sale	402	402
Total current assets	<u>216,264</u>	<u>211,209</u>
Investment in and advances to affiliates and joint ventures	<u>21,189</u>	<u>19,730</u>
Property, plant, equipment, mineral rights and reserves:		
Land and mineral rights	13,845	12,761
Depreciable assets	<u>260,292</u>	<u>252,430</u>
	274,137	265,191
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>169,384</u>	<u>165,127</u>
	<u>104,753</u>	<u>100,064</u>
Other assets:		
Goodwill	20,850	20,644
Intangible assets, net	2,759	3,009
Deferred tax assets	5,190	4,579
Other assets	11,155	9,294
	<u>39,954</u>	<u>37,526</u>
	<u>\$ 382,160</u>	<u>\$ 368,529</u>
LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 25,934	\$ 24,722
Accrued liabilities	29,214	38,547
Total current liabilities	<u>55,148</u>	<u>63,269</u>
Long-term debt	<u>47,710</u>	<u>34,838</u>
Minority interests in subsidiaries	262	259
Deferred compensation	7,631	7,045
Other liabilities	13,400	14,262
	<u>21,293</u>	<u>21,566</u>
Stockholders' equity:		
Common stock	320	320
Additional paid in capital	74,569	72,194
Retained earnings	190,542	184,125
Accumulated other comprehensive income	9,575	8,644
	<u>275,006</u>	<u>265,283</u>
Less:		
Treasury stock	16,997	16,427
	<u>258,009</u>	<u>248,856</u>
	<u>\$ 382,160</u>	<u>\$ 368,529</u>

* Condensed from audited financial statements.

AMCOL INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS (unaudited)
(In thousands)

	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2006	2005
Cash flow from operating activities:		
Net income	\$ 9,711	\$ 6,952
Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash: provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Depreciation, depletion, and amortization	4,907	4,885
Changes in assets and liabilities, net of effects of acquisitions:		
Increase in current assets	(7,873)	(7,290)
Increase in noncurrent assets	(2,610)	(3,059)
Increase (decrease) in current liabilities	(6,929)	1,624
Increase (decrease) in noncurrent liabilities	(276)	(251)
Other	(931)	(184)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>(4,001)</u>	<u>2,677</u>
Cash flow from investing activities:		
Acquisition of land, mineral rights, and depreciable assets	(9,311)	(5,157)
Acquisitions, net of cash	(1,289)	(1,632)
Other	162	1,129
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	<u>(10,438)</u>	<u>(5,660)</u>
Cash flow from financing activities:		
Net change in outstanding debt	12,491	7,821
Proceeds from sales of treasury stock	1,373	550
Purchases of treasury stock	(1,075)	-
Dividends paid	(3,291)	(2,656)
Other	1,650	-
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	<u>11,148</u>	<u>5,715</u>
Effect of foreign currency rate changes on cash	743	(825)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	<u>(2,548)</u>	<u>1,907</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	15,997	17,594
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	<u>\$ 13,449</u>	<u>\$ 19,501</u>

AMCOL INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION
SEGMENT RESULTS (unaudited)

Minerals	Three months ended March 31,					
	2006		2005		2006 vs. 2005	
(Dollars in Thousands)						
Net sales	\$ 80,071	100.0%	\$ 73,448	100.0%	\$ 6,623	9.0%
Cost of sales	65,179	81.4%	59,974	81.7%	5,205	8.7%
Gross profit	14,892	18.6%	13,474	18.3%	1,418	10.5%
General, selling and administrative expenses	6,125	7.6%	5,679	7.7%	446	7.9%
Operating profit	8,767	10.9%	7,795	10.6%	972	12.5%

Environmental	Three months ended March 31,					
	2006		2005		2006 vs. 2005	
(Dollars in Thousands)						
Net sales	\$ 55,130	100.0%	\$ 42,304	100.0%	\$ 12,826	30.3%
Cost of sales	35,775	64.9%	27,444	64.9%	8,331	30.4%
Gross profit	19,355	35.1%	14,860	35.1%	4,495	30.2%
General, selling and administrative expenses	11,624	21.1%	9,723	23.0%	1,901	19.6%
Operating profit	7,731	14.0%	5,137	12.1%	2,594	50.5%

Transportation	Three months ended March 31,					
	2006		2005		2006 vs. 2005	
(Dollars in Thousands)						
Net sales	\$ 12,471	100.0%	\$ 10,985	100.0%	\$ 1,486	13.5%
Cost of sales	10,989	88.1%	9,639	87.7%	1,350	14.0%
Gross profit	1,482	11.9%	1,346	12.3%	136	10.1%
General, selling and administrative expenses	799	6.4%	773	7.0%	26	3.4%
Operating profit	683	5.5%	573	5.2%	110	19.2%

Corporate	Three months ended March 31,			
	2006	2005	2006 vs. 2005	
(Dollars in Thousands)				
Intersegment shipping sales	\$ (4,908)	\$ (4,687)		
Intersegment shipping costs	(4,908)	(4,687)		
Gross profit	-	-		
Corporate general, selling and administrative expenses	4,255	4,361	(106)	-2.4%
Nanocomposite business development expenses	879	909	(30)	-3.3%
Operating loss	5,134	5,270	(136)	-2.6%