

Business News Bulletin

## Assphonics Q3 Earnings Slide 5%, Pants Drop 13%

Harry Butts, 10.18.04, 10:00 AM ET

NEW YORK - In the headlines this morning, it's beginning to look like a disappointing holiday season for the country's top toilet paper makers.

The No. 1 U.S. TP maker **Assphonics** (nyse: ASPH – news – people) said third-quarter earnings slid 5%, with sales down 2%. The company blamed a 13% drop in sales of its pants line. The company also reported lower worldwide sales of its Sensual Suppository and RoboDump brands.

The company said cost cuts helped it post higher third-quarter earnings from a year ago but cited a difficult retail environment and softness in the overseas division. They also stated that they worry about consumer spending and lowered expectations for the crucial Thanksgiving-to-Christmas season.

The announcement comes at a time of heightened concern over similar products, including rival **ButtPro's** (nyse: BUTP – news -- people) Dingleberry Dabbers, which it pulled because it was linked to increased risk of heart attack.

U.S. stocks opened slightly lower as oil set a new record above \$55 per barrel and investors prepared for a series of earnings reports.

The U.S. dollar rose against other major currencies in European trading.