



# NEWS RELEASE

A.M. BEST COMPANY, INC., OLDWICK, NJ • A.M. BEST EUROPE – RATING SERVICES LIMITED, LONDON  
A.M. BEST EUROPE – INFORMATION SERVICES LIMITED, LONDON • A.M. BEST ASIA-PACIFIC, LTD., HONG KONG

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **A.M. Best Assigns Ratings to Vine Court Assurance Incorporated**

**OLDWICK, N.J., January 16, 2012**—A.M. Best Co. has assigned a financial strength rating of A (Excellent) and issuer credit rating of “a” to **Vine Court Assurance Incorporated** (Vine Court) (Burlington, VT). The outlook assigned to both ratings is stable.

The ratings are based on Vine Court’s profile as a single parent captive of The Kroger Co. (Kroger), while exhibiting strong risk-adjusted capitalization, positive overall net income, a growing capital base, conservative investment results and a strong adherence to Kroger’s risk controls and the overall risk culture of Kroger.

Key rating triggers that could result in a downgrading of Vine Court’s ratings include a precipitous decline in risk-adjusted capital strength. Key rating triggers that could result in an upgrading of Vine Court’s ratings include consistent profitable operating performance coupled with a substantial increase in risk-adjusted capitalization.

A.M. Best remains the leading rating agency of alternative risk transfer entities, with more than 200 such vehicles rated in the United States and throughout the world.

For current Best’s Credit Ratings and independent data on the captive and alternative insurance market, please visit [www.ambest.com/captive](http://www.ambest.com/captive).

The principal methodology used in determining these ratings is [Best’s Credit Rating Methodology -- Global Life and Non-Life Insurance Edition](#), which provides a comprehensive explanation of A.M. Best’s rating

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process and highlights the different rating criteria employed. Additional key criteria utilized include: “Risk Management and the Rating Process for Insurance Companies”; “Understanding Universal BCAR”; and “Alternative Risk Transfer (ART).” Methodologies can be found at [www.ambest.com/ratings/methodology](http://www.ambest.com/ratings/methodology).

**Founded in 1899, A.M. Best Company is the world’s oldest and most authoritative insurance rating and information source. For more information, visit [www.ambest.com](http://www.ambest.com).**

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