PRESS RELEASES

May 9, 1997

Ecolab Shareholders Elect Directors, Approve Employee Option And Director Compensation Plans, Ratify Appointment Of Independent Accountants

ST. PAUL, Minn., May 9, 1997: At today's annual meeting, Ecolab Inc.'s shareholders re-elected three directors to the board for three-year terms: Ruth S. Block, retired Executive Vice President and Chief Insurance Officer of The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States; Allan L. Schuman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Ecolab; and Michael E. Shannon, Chairman and Chief Financial and Administrative Officer of Ecolab.

In other business, shareholders approved the company's 1997 stock incentive plan and its 1997 non-employee director deferred compensation plan. Shareholders also ratified the board's appointment of Coopers & Lybrand L.L.P. as the company's independent accountants for the current year.

Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing and maintenance products and services for the hospitality, institutional and industrial markets. For the year ended December 31, 1996, Ecolab reported sales of $1.5 billion; including European joint venture sales of $0.9 billion, Ecolab's global sales coverage was $2.4 billion.

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