

PRESS RELEASES

May 18, 1998

Ecolab To Acquire Commercial Food Equipment Service Company

ST. PAUL, Minn.-- May 18, 1998--Ecolab Inc. announced today it has agreed to purchase GCS Service, Inc., a Danbury, Connecticut-based provider of commercial kitchen equipment repair services.

GCS sales were \$48 million in 1997. The purchase is subject to certain closing conditions; terms of the transaction were not announced.

Commenting on the agreement, Allan L. Schuman, Ecolab's President and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "GCS will provide Ecolab with a natural extension of our Circle the Customer strategy. Ecolab is the leading provider of products and services to the hospitality markets, while GCS is a leader in providing commercial food service equipment parts and around the clock emergency repair services to our same customers. We will expand GCS to enhance its national coverage and expect to leverage our mutual relationships to create even better service for our customers and improved growth for our operations."

Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, maintenance and pest elimination products and services for the hospitality, healthcare and light industrial markets. For the year ended December 31, 1997, Ecolab reported sales of \$1.6 billion; including European Joint Venture sales of \$0.9 billion, Ecolab's global coverage reached \$2.5 billion. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the Pacific Exchange under the symbol ECL.

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