PRESS RELEASES

Dec 9, 1999

Ecolab Expands Commercial Food Equipment Repair Business

ST. PAUL, Minn., December 9, 1999 - Ecolab Inc. announced today it has purchased Metro Appliance Service, Inc., a Minneapolis, MN-based provider of commercial kitchen equipment parts and repair services in the Upper Midwest. Metro joins Ecolab's growing national commercial kitchen equipment service network providing parts and service programs for commercial cooking, warewashing and refrigeration equipment. Metro's 1998 sales were approximately $5 million. Terms of the transaction were not announced.

Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, maintenance and pest elimination products and services for the hospitality, institutional and industrial markets. For the year ended December 31, 1998, Ecolab reported sales of $1.9 billion; including European joint venture sales of $0.9 billion, Ecolab's global sales coverage was $2.8 billion. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the Pacific Exchange under the symbol ECL.

Ecolab news releases and other investor information are available on the Internet at www.ecolab.com and by telephone at 1-800-FACT-ECL.

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