PRESS RELEASES

Dec 20, 1999

Schuman Elected Ecolab Chairman

ST. PAUL, Minn., December 20, 1999: Consistent with its previously announced intentions, the Board of Directors of Ecolab Inc. elected Allan L. Schuman, currently President and Chief Executive Officer, to the additional post of Chairman effective January 1, 2000. Schuman succeeds Michael E. Shannon, currently Ecolab's Chairman and Chief Administrative Officer, who will retire on December 31, 1999.

Commenting on the Board's action, Schuman said, "I am honored by the Board's confidence and the opportunity to lead this great company into its next century of growth. We have huge opportunities before us, and I look forward with anticipation to serving Ecolab, its shareholders and all of our dedicated associates worldwide over the next several years in this leadership position. I also wish to thank Mike Shannon for his many contributions to the company during his tenure."

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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